

SPECIAL

Screenplay by

Brett S. Harrison

Brett S. Harrison
2518 S. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19145
Tel: (215) 551-0749

FADE IN:

INT. DR. FENSTEMACHER'S OFFICE - MORNING

At the bottom of the screen are momentarily but prominently flashed the words, "Lycoming County General Hospital: November 1978"

The office of WILLIAM FENSTEMACHER M.D. in the psychiatric ward of Lycoming County General Hospital. Five people are gathered for a commitment hearing. They are: DR. FENSTEMACHER - A tall man with a bushy red moustache and an imposing head of matching, unruly red hair. He is smoking a pipe., JEFF CUTLER - The subject of the hearing, Jeff is obviously very distracted. He keeps tapping his finger. Jeff is 20 years old, dressed in a Van Halen t-shirt and torn jeans with long disheveled hair and wire rim glasses; DEBBIE BOWERS - The representative for the county. She's like the district attorney in a court case. She is an attractive woman in her late 20's; EARL BEEVERS - Jeff's attorney. He is a rotund, good natured man in his late 30's with a bad haircut and cowboy boots; LENNY CUTLER - Jeff's father. Lenny is in his early fifties. He is balding but has the air of man who has run his own business for years. The HONORABLE CHARLES SEYMOUR - He's in his early 70's. He's tall with white hair. He's dressed in street clothes, which is the procedure for commitment hearings.

The office is badly lit and looks way too small for the gathering that is currently taking place. Judge Seymour is sitting on a large, overstuffed brown leather chair. Earl and Jeff are sitting on a black, leather couch. Lenny, Dr. Fenstemacher and Debbie are sitting on folding chairs.

Lenny is holding Jeff's hand. Judge Seymour shuffles some papers and looks up from his work.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

Would counsel like to add anything before I make my final decision?

EARL

No thank you, Your Honor.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

Ms. Fensterwald?

DEBBIE

Lycoming County is satisfied, your honor.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

Jeff do you understand everything
that was said here today?

Jeff looks down to the floor.

EARL

Yes he does.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

I'd like Jeff to answer. If you
don't mind, Earl.

JEFF

I do Judge.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

Son, I've heard some things today
that concern me. Stories about how
you lose your temper around your
parents. Going up to total
strangers and spouting total
nonsense. You're lucky one of them
didn't bash you in the nose, or
worse.

LENNY

That's what I keep telling him.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

If you don't mind Mr. Cutler.
You've had your say. Now let me
have mine.

LENNY

Sorry, Your Honor.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

Now for the other stuff. I talk to
my dogs myself. I have three of
them. A Schnauzer, a Pomeranian,
and a mutt. Dogs need constant
talking to. Of course, I'm not
usually buck naked and high on
wacky weed at the time.

They laugh politely.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

(continued)

Of course I wasn't half naked and
high on wacky weed at the time.

(MORE)

JUDGE SEYMOUR(cont'd)

Dr. Fenstemacher, just one thing before I make my final decision. I assume you have a long-term facility in mind for Jeff?

LENNY

I spoke to Dr. Kaplan at The Pennypacker Institute in Philadelphia.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

Fine facility.

DR. FENSTEMACHER

I also had occasion to speak with Dr. Kaplan this morning. They're holding a bed for him pending your findings Your Honor.

JUDGE SEYMOUR

Very well. Jeffrey Cutler you are hereby ordered to undergo psychiatric treatment for no less than 90 days. Young man, in a couple of years I want to see you back in school with at least 2 girlfriends and another one on the side. This court is adjourned.

Judge Seymour stands up.

LENNY

We're going to get you help Jeff.

Lenny squeezes Jeff's shoulder.

EXT. LYCOMING COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Paramedics are carrying Jeff in a stretcher out of a side entrance. Lenny and Dr. Fenstemacher follow right behind.

LENNY

Is an ambulance absolutely necessary?

DR. FENSTEMACHER

Sorry, Mr. Cutler, it's the law. Whenever we transport court committed patients we are required to use an ambulance.

PARAMEDIC

Don't worry, Mr. Cutler. We've done this a thousand times.

PARAMEDIC TWO

Don't worry about it. We'll take good care of your boy.

Jeff is heavily medicated. He mumbles unintelligibly.

LENNY

Jeff's mom baked him some cookies.
(holds up a plastic bag)
Can he have them?

DR. FENSTEMACHER

(to paramedics)
Why don't you take them, fellas?
Jeff can have some when he wakes up.

PARAMEDIC

OK doc.

Paramedics close doors of the ambulance. They get in and drive away. Lenny gets into his car, a Buick LeSabre, and follows them.

EXT. PENNYPACKER INSTITUTE -DAY

The Pennypacker Institute is a huge complex made up of several different buildings, most of them interconnected by a network of extensions. The main building is a giant, majestic stone structure dating back to the Revolutionary War. The ambulance pulls up to the entrance. DOCTOR MORRIS KAPLAN, a dark haired man in his early 40's with a chiseled physique and a tweed jacket, walks up to the driver's side.

DR. KAPLAN

(to paramedic)
Welcome to Pennypacker, fellas.

PARAMEDIC

Pleased to meet you, Dr. Kaplan.

Lenny walks into view.

DR. KAPLAN

You must be Mr. Cutler. We spoke earlier on the phone.

Lenny extends his hand.

LENNY
Pleased to meet you, Dr. Kaplan.
This place is nicer than I
expected.

DR. KAPLAN
We like it.

The paramedics take Jeff out of the ambulance.

PARAMEDIC
Where do you want him?

DR. KAPLAN
Just put him in the lobby for now.

At that moment a fairly attractive young lady walks by in a tennis outfit.

ELAINE
Hi Dr. Kaplan. See you at 4?

LENNY
I didn't know the nurses were so
pretty here.

DR. KAPLAN
Actually, she's a patient of mine.

LENNY
(to Jeff)
Looks like we sent you to a nice
place.

Jeff laughs.

EXT. PENNYPACKER INSTITUTE -DAY

Dr. Kaplan walks Lenny to his car.

DR. KAPLAN
Mr. Cutler you have nothing to
worry about

In the background, a loud alarm goes off.

JEFF
What the hell was that?

DR. KAPLAN

When a patient acts out, attendants are called from other parts of the building. Don't worry, it's another floor.

LENNY

That's it, we're going home.

Lenny moves towards the main entrance. Dr. Kaplan puts a benevolent but firm hand on Lenny's shoulder.

DR. KAPLAN

You're forgetting that Jeff is committed. He can't go.

LENNY

I don't like the sound of that alarm. What kind of snake-pit is this?

DR. KAPLAN

It's for the patient's protection, as well as ours. Relax. He's in good hands. Pennypacker is one of the best hospitals in the country. Your son will get the help he needs.

Lenny breaks down and starts crying on the side of his car.

INT. BARRY'S ROOM - NEXT DAY

Dr. Kaplan and MARY ELLEN DONAHOE enter the room. Mary Ellen is a nurse. She's 35, slightly pudgy but with the fresh scrubbed face of the former prom queen she once was many years ago.

DR. KAPLAN

Jeff, Mary Ellen's a nurse here on the unit. She's going to give you orientation.

MARY ELLEN

How are ya Jeff?

JEFF

I'm a little zonked out from the ride, to be honest.

DR. KAPLAN
 (to Mary Ellen)
 You OK?

MARY ELLEN
 I'm fine Dr. Kaplan. Just need to
 go over some things with Jeff here.

DR. KAPLAN
 Okey dokey then. Jeff I'll see you
 tomorrow at morning meeting, then
 we'll meet right after.

JEFF
 Morning meeting?

MARY ELLEN
 I'll explain that to you inna sec.
 You hungry?

JEFF
 I could eat a horse.

MARY ELLEN
 Well we don't have any of those.
 Will eggs do?

JEFF
 Eggs will do just fine.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT LOBBY - DAY

Mary Ellen and Jeff are playing ping pong.

MARY ELLEN
 So I hear you're from Williamsport.

JEFF
 Yes I am.

At that moment a somewhat frumpy woman in her early 30's
 comes up to Jeff. Her name is MINDI WEINBERGER.

MINDI
 Hi. I'm Mindi.

MARY ELLEN
 Mindi, this is Jeff. He just got in
 this morning.

MINDI

Please to meet you Jeff. Will you eat my pussy?

JEFF

Nice...to...meet you too Mindi.

MARY ELLEN

Now Mindi, we just talked about that kind of language. We don't have to take away your privileges, do we?

MINDI

I'll watch it. Do you have a cigarette?

MARY ELLEN

Now Mindi, you know that your doctor said we're not allowed to give you any if you use up your daily allotment.

MINDI

You're all gonna die.

Mindi dramatically flails her arms in all directions as she walks away.

JEFF

What the hell was that about?

MARY ELLEN

Mindi has a little impulse problem.

JEFF

I see

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

Mary Ellen and Jeff are back in his room.

MARY ELLEN

One of the ways we help people get better here is the privilege system.

JEFF

OK.

MARY ELLEN

The highest privilege is called "Grounds". That means you can leave the floor anytime you want except for morning meeting, meal times and after 9 PM. The only exception is if you're on a T.R.A.

JEFF

Hold the phone. What' a T.R.A. ?

MARY ELLEN

It stands for Therapeutic Resocialization Activity. It's a fancy name for excursion. Then there's "P.A.G." That stands for "Patient Accompanied Grounds". That means you can leave the floor with another patient. After that there's "Group".

JEFF

I think I get that. What's the lowest privilege?

MARY ELLEN

That would be "Special", which you're on now. I wouldn't take it personal. All patients are placed on "Special" when they first come on the unit. Basically, you can't leave unless accompanied one on one by a staff member.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT LOBBY - MORNING

The furniture has been arranged in the lounge so that everyone is sitting in a circle. There are 20 patients and numerous staff members.

DR. KAPLAN

Hi, group. How is everybody doing today?

GROUP

Hi, Dr. Kaplan.

DR. KAPLAN

We have a new patient today. His name is Jeff. Jeff, why don't you tell the room something about yourself.

JEFF

OK. Let's see...I'm from
Williamsport...I'm 20 years old and
I like music.

DAVE COHEN is a psych-tech. He is dressed in a neat flannel shirt and a well worn pair of khakis. Psych-techs are the modern day equivalent of "the men in the white suits".

DAVE

The home of Little League Baseball.

JEFF

You are correct, sir.

Mindi raises her hand. Mary Ellen looks little nervous.

MARY ELLEN

Mindi. Can you keep it clean this morning?

MINDI

I just wanted to tell Jeff that Dave really knows his music. He's got a great album collection. That's all. Carry on.

Mary Ellen lets go a humongous sigh of reilief.

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

CHUCK KESSLER knocks on Jeff's door. Chuck is 6'2'', with a chiseled chin and a physique most guys would kill for.

CHUCK

Hey Jeff. I'm Chuck.

JEFF

Pleased to meet ya Chuck.

CHUCK

Mind if I sit down?

JEFF

No, not at all.

Chuck takes a seat.

CHUCK

Do you get high Jeff?

JEFF

I used to. Haven't in a while.

Chuck takes out a joint out of his pocket and puts it in Jeff's hand.

CHUCK

Welcome to the Young Adult Unit
Jeff.

JEFF

Gee, Chuck. I don't know.

CHUCK

Hey, are you gonna buy their
bullshit? There's nothing wrong
with you. You can't let them take
your high away. If you do that,
then they've won.

JEFF

Listen. I'll hold on to it. But
where do you smoke it?

CHUCK

Relax dude. Here's how you play
this. They should be upping your
privileges in a few days. When they
do, come get me and I'll join you.
Then, while the rest of the group
is doing their thing, we do ours by
the fence.

JEFF

So what do I owe you?

CHUCK

The first one is free, dude.

They do that hipster, thumb-locking handshake thing.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - DAY

A group of patients are gathering in the lobby. Dave Cohen has on a denim jacket. With him are Chuck, Mindi and Jeff. Dave is carrying two baseball gloves and a baseball. Mindi is dressed in a sweater. Jeff and Chuck both have sweatshirts.

DAVE

OK. Is that it? Everyone set?

MINDI

Sure.

JEFF

Sure.

DAVE

(to Jeff)

Can I trust you? Mindi and I are going to play some catch. You're free to walk around the field.

JEFF

You can trust me Dave.

The group walks onto South Field.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH FIELD - DAY

Dave and Mindi are playing catch. Chuck and Jeff walk.

JEFF

So where are we going?

CHUCK

Be cool bro. Be cool.

Dave and Mindi continue to play catch as the two walk towards the fence.

CHUCK

Do you have what I gave you?

Jeff produces joint from his pocket.

JEFF

Any good?

CHUCK

Oh yeh. Come to poppa.

Jeff hands the joint and hands it to Chuck. Chuck lights it up, takes a hit, and passes it back to Jeff.

JEFF

(takes a toke)

Good stuff man. So what are you in here for?

CHUCK
I smashed my girlfriend's car
window. The court ordered me to get
treatment in lieu of prison.
(passes joint back to
Jeff)

JEFF
That doesn't sound too bad.

CHUCK
She was in it at the time.

JEFF
Ahh.

At that exact moment Dave and Mindi appear, seemingly out of
nowhere.

DAVE
(to Jeff)
Is this how you thank me? You're
not here one day and already you're
getting high.
(turns to Chuck)
OK, man, hand it over.

Chuck is furiously finishing his joint.

DAVE
Don't make me call men, Chuck.

Jeff cracks a quizzical grin.

JEFF
What are "men"?

Chuck gives the joint to Dave, which he immediately puts out
on the ground.

CHUCK
The goon squad. You know the men in
the white suits.

JEFF
I get it.

DAVE
I find that expression offensive.
It implies we don't care. You're
both dropped to special.

MINDI
(to camera)
And they say I'm crazy.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Kaplan and Jeff are facing each other. The office is crammed with bookshelves and tasteful artwork.

DR. KAPLAN
You don't waste any time, do you?

JEFF
You heard about that, did you?

DR. KAPLAN
Well, besides being your doctor,
I'm also head of the unit.

JEFF
I guessed that.

DR. KAPLAN
I grew up in the 60's. I'm no
stranger to the wacky weed. If you
want to get high when you get out
of here, be my guest. But in the
meantime, use your head. OK?

JEFF
You have too many rules here. This
place is a drag.

DR. KAPLAN
You're free to leave anytime.

JEFF
Well actually, Doctor, I'm not.

DR. KAPLAN
Ooops.
(clears his throat)
Now about your mother.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - LATER

Chuck and Jeff are playing ping pong.

JEFF
Sorry, man.

CHUCK
 Don't sweat it, dude. It's that
 dickhead, Dave. All those ex
 hippies are the same. They're a
 bunch of control freaks.

Jeff hits the ball.

CHUCK
 Man, where'd you learn to play.

JEFF
 We used to have a table at home.

CHUCK
 Excellent.

JEFF
 (in a soft tone)
 I guess we won't be getting high.

CHUCK
 Speak for yourself.
 (in a tone obviously meant
 for the whole room)
 Great game, Jeff.

Reaches over and shakes Jeff's hand.

JEFF
 But we're not even done yet.

CHUCK
 Be cool, man.
 (he motions towards his
 hand with his head)
 I've gotta hand it to you Jeff, you
 sure can play.

JEFF
 What the fuck are you mumbling
 about?

Jeff hits the ball again.

CHUCK
 I said, I've got to **hand it** to you
 Jeff.

Chuck raised his voice on the word "hand".

JEFF
 Oh.

Jeff smiles an "Oh, I finally caught on" smile. He opens up his hand only to find a large white pill. It is a quaalude.

JEFF

Oh my God.

CHUCK

Be cool man.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - DAY

Dr. Kazanjian is sitting in a circle with a group of patients.

DR KAZANJIAN

OK kiddies. What do people want to do this weekend?

10 people altogether are present in this scene. One doctor(DOCTOR MERWYN KAZANJIAN), a nurse (TRACY VANDERBILT), and a psych tech(TYRONE SIMMONS) and 8 patients. The patients are Jeff, Mindi, Chuck, MARY KATHERINE O'HARA, JACK MESSERSCHMIDT, ANNE FRAZIER, KELVIN MCLEOD, and DARLA WINDER.

TRACY

Doctor, should we tell Jeff about Standing Committee?

DR KAZANJIAN

Tyrone, it's all yours.

TYRONE

Jeff, we're about to meet to decide what to do this weekend. Standing Committee is a small group of patients whose job it is to take the other patients' suggestions vote on the various activities for the weekend.

DR KAZANJIAN

We like to involve the patients in the process.

TRACY

He gets it. Let's get started.

ANNE

I feel like seeing a movie.

KELVIN

Me too.

MINDI
I'd like to see a movie. Then after
that everyone can eat my...

TRACY
Mindi, do we need some quiet time?

Mindi quickly gets a cigarette out and lights up.

KELVIN
That's one way to shut her up.

Group laughs.

DR KAZANJIAN
(pretending to write in
his notebook)
New treatment plan for Mindi. One
pack of smokes in the morning.

TRACY
Will do doctor.

Everyone laughs.

DR KAZANJIAN
Now where were we?

TYRONE
I believe we have yet to choose a
movie.

ANNE
How bout "Deer Hunter" The reviews
have been fabulous.

KELVIN
Yeh, "Deer Hunter"!

Anne writes in notebook.

TRACY
Now waita second gang. I'm not sure
that "Deer Hunter" is appropriate
for this crowd. I read that it's
about the Vietnam war and that it's
very violent.

TYRONE
So, it's realistic then. Good. It's
about time people get to see what
really went on over there.

DR KAZANJIAN
That's right, you're a vet, aren't
you?

TYRONE
Two years in country.

DR KAZANJIAN
(impressed)
Wow! What was it like?

TRACY
(clearing her throat)
Ahem! No offense, Doctor, but I'm
sure you agree that a little focus
is in order here.

DR KAZANJIAN
While you have a point Tracy I'm
inclined to grant a little latitude
here. If anyone has a problem with
violence, then they shouldn't go.
It's that simple.

TRACY
(forces a smile)
You're the boss.

ANNE
Hands for "Deer Hunter"?

Everyone raises their hands. Anne writes down the names.

DR KAZANJIAN
Wait a second, gang. We need a
staff member for this one. Jeff
still doesn't have full privileges.
Tyrone?

TYRONE
Sorry Doc. My sister invited me for
dinner that night.

TRACY
I'll go.

DR. KAZANJIAN
But Tracy, I thought you were dead
set against it.

DARLA
She's hot for DeNiro.

TRACY
 (smiles sheepishly)
 Guilty as charged.

TYRONE
 Just so you know, Jeff. Now
 Standing Committee still has to
 vote on this.

ANNE
 The results will be posted in the
 nurse's station after lunch.

JEFF
 Cool.

INT. A MARKET STREET EL CAR - NIGHT

The group is waiting for their stop on the way back after
 seeing "The Deer Hunter".

TRACY
 (to Jeff)
 Someone needs to get his butt to
 the optometrist first thing Monday.

DARLA
 Good idea. That's the last time I
 want to sit in the second row for
 any movie, let alone something as
 intense as "The Deer Hunter".

KELVIN
 Amen to that.

JEFF
 I'll talk to Dr. Kaplan first thing
 Monday morning.

TRACY
 Wonderful idea. What did everyone
 think of the movie?

JACK
 I loved it. I felt that the Russian
 Roulette symbolized the futility of
 fighting the Viet Cong. At any time
 there was always at least one
 bullet in the chamber, so speak.

TRACY

OK, Jack, we all know you have a masters in political science from Penn.

Everyone laughs.

ANNE

I love DeNiro. He's dreamy.

DARLA

Oh yeh. He can join my army any day of the week.

TRACY

You said it, girl.

Darla and Tracy high-five.

JEFF

I hear he likes his women like he likes his coffee. Hot and black.

DARLA

What you know about that, Jeff? Tracy, can I get an excursion this weekend to New York to visit DeNiro?

TRACY

I don't know Tracy. I hear he's got a girlfriend.

KELVIN

Whoever she is she's no match for Darla on a bad night.

TRACY

I didn't know you were so smooth, Kelvin. You wouldn't be making your move, would you?

KELVIN

Nah, Darla's fine but she's not my type. Too high maintenance for me.

Kelvin smiles slyly at Darla. She smiles back.

Train slows down.

TRACY

OK gang. This is our stop.

The group exits the train and walks down the stairs.

EXT. WEST PHILLY - NIGHT

The group walks up the street towards the hospital. Across the street are 5 African-American teenagers hanging out in front of a house, drinking beer. They are ages 14-17.

TRACY

I'm not sure I like the looks of this. Everyone just keep walking.

TEEN #1

What's up, people?

JEFF

The sky.

TEEN #2

He's one of those lunatics from the asylum.

TEEN #3

I wonder can those crazy people fight?

The teenagers start throwing stones at the group.

TRACY

This would be a good time to run!!

The group runs feverishly towards Pennypacker. The teens all high five each other.

TEEN #3

Oh yeh. They runnin'. They runnin'.

CUT TO:

DARLA

Nice move, Jeff!!!

KELVIN

Real fucking smart, dude! Real fucking smart!

INT. NURSES STATION - NIGHT

Tracy walks over to the privilege board and drops Jeff's name from "P.A.G." to "Special"

JEFF

C'mon. You're dropping me to special? How is that fair?

TRACY

What you did out there showed poor impulse control. We're all lucky no one got hurt tonight. Damn lucky!

JEFF

You're nuts.

TRACY

This is not a topic for discussion.

JEFF

It was a joke. I'm sorry those guys threw stones, but I was just kidding.

TRACY

I think you need to go to your room right now and cool off.

JEFF

I'm fine.

TRACY

Do I need to get help?

A psych-tech is playing chess with a patient.

JEFF

Just great. I'll talk to Dr. Kaplan on Monday about this.

TRACY

That's your option.

Jeff storms off to his room.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. KAPLAN

The sky? They said what's up and you said "The sky"?

JEFF

I didn't think they were going to chase us.

DR. KAPLAN
(trying to suppress his
laughter)
You're quite the comedian. I'll
give you that much.

JEFF
I didn't do anything wrong.

DR. KAPLAN
I agree. It was not the smartest
thing you could have done but,
between us you understand, Tracy
overreacted.

JEFF
Thank God you agree. When do I get
my privileges back.

DR. KAPLAN
It's not that simple Jeff.

JEFF
It's not fair.

DR. KAPLAN
No, it's not. But rules are rules.

JEFF
Just great.

DR. KAPLAN
(shakes his head in
amusement)
The sky. What a comedian.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - DAY

Morning meeting.

DR. KAPLAN
Darla has a momentous announcement
to make.

DARLA
I'll be getting out in two weeks.

Cheers from staff and patients alike.

KELVIN
I helped her find an apartment.

DR. KAPLAN

She will be joining the Young Adult Day Program during the day and taking a class at Temple at night.

TRACY

I need to hug someone.

Tracy goes over to hug Darla.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT -DAY

It's another Friday. Excursions are being chosen.

ANNE

I have an announcement to make.

TRACY

Go ahead Anne.

ANNE

With Darla going there's an opening on Standing Committee.

JEFF

I'd like to put my name in.

TRACY

Remember Jeff. No wisecracks to the local thugs.

JEFF

Scout's honor.

TRACY

And You realize this is a big responsibility?

JEFF

I understand.

TRACY

Then I'm cool with it.

ANNE

Sounds good to me.

KELVIN

I second it.

ANNE

Welcome to Standing Committee Jeff

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - NIGHT

A large banner hangs over the ping-pong table. It says "Good Luck Darla". Darla walks over to a record player that is one the table next to the nurse's station.

DARLA

It's time to get this party started.

Darla puts on a song reminiscent of "Shining Star" by Earth Wind & Fire, if not the actual song. Most of the patients and staff are present. Everybody is getting into the groove. Even Mary Ellen is shaking her money-maker.

TYRONE

You go on with yo bad self, girl.

MARY ELLEN

I can get shake my thing with the best of them.

Suddenly everyone grabs onto each other and a line dance is started. At some point Tracy and Tyrone get up on the ping-pong table and start slow dancing.

JEFF

(to Kelvin)

What's this then? Are they a couple?

KELVIN

Don't tell me you didn't know. Man, even Mindi knows and she's psychotic.

Mindi is dancing with herself, her ever-present cigarette precariously dangling from her mouth.

INT. SNACK BAR - DAY

Jeff is having a burger. Darla sneaks up behind him and covers his eyes with her hands.

DARLA

Guess who?

JEFF

Gee I don't know. I hope it's not Mindi, cause I don't smoke.

DARLA
(laughs)
You're nuts.

JEFF
Shhh. Nobody's supposed to know.

They hug.

JEFF
How The hell are you? You look
great.

DARLA
Never felt better.

INT. EL - DAY

Darla is riding home. She has a very sad expression on her face.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. KAPLAN
Big weekend coming up. Anything you
care to discuss?

JEFF
I'll be fine.

DR. KAPLAN
For whatever reason I could tell
them you're not ready.

JEFF
Really, I'm fine.

DR. KAPLAN
Well, you know I'm here for you.

JEFF
Thanks. It's appreciated.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - AFTERNOON

Jeff's family have come to pick him up. It's Lenny, his mother SANDY, his kid brother GARY, and baby sister LISA.

GARY
Hey, big bro.

They hug. Jeff hugs everyone.

LENNY

Sorry we're late. Traffic was heavy.

SANDY

We wouldn't have been late if we had taken the turnpike.

LENNY

There was construction on the turnpike. How many times do I have to tell you?

MARY ELLEN

What do we have here. Jeff, you didn't tell me you had such a nice looking family.

JEFF

Cause I don't.

MARY ELLEN

Always the comedian.

(to Lisa)

What's your name, little girl? Aren't you just the cutest little thing.

LISA

Lisa. I'm ten.

LENNY

Did you talk to your doctor? You said you might have some difficulty getting in touch with him.

MARY ELLEN

Dr. Kaplan is unavailable but we were able to get permission from one of the residents. Go have fun with your family, Jeff.

Jeff has a sheepish grin on his face.

INT. CHINESE RESTAURANT - EVENING

The Cutlers are having dinner in a Chinese restaurant. Jews in a Chinese restaurant. There's a shocker.

SANDY
So, Jeff. How are they treating
you?.

JEFF
They're treating me fine.

LISA
Our swim team made the states this
year.

JEFF
That's great. Better watch out,
Gary.

GARY
Oh yeh, I'm scared.

LENNY
You should be. The kid's better
than you were when you were her
age.

GARY
(grabs Lisa)
Well she still can't take me.

Sandy clears her throat and makes shifts her eyes towards
Jeff when he's not looking.

JEFF
OK guys, better cut it out. You're
upsetting the crazy person.

SANDY
You think you're so smart. As it
happens I have a cold.

Jeff starts clearing his throat loudly and obnoxiously. Lisa
and Gary join in. The WAITER comes to the table, thinking
something's not right.

WAITER
Everything OK? Food be up soon.

LENNY
We're fine.

The waiter walks away

LENNY
Look what you three did. You
embarrassed us.

The waiter comes up hurriedly takes the food off the serving cart and puts in on the Cutler's table.

SANDY

I wish they'd move this fast all the time.

LENNY

Amen to that, honey.

WAITER

Who had Moo shoo Duck.

JEFF

(to waiter)

Thank you.

EXT. PENNYPACKER INSTITUTE - NIGHT

Lenny walks Jeff up to the floor.

LENNY

We had a nice time. You look good kid.

JEFF

Thanks Dad. Thanks for coming up.

LENNY

Can I let you in on a secret son?

JEFF

Yes Dad?

LENNY

Your mom's that way with everyone. Cut her some slack. She loves you.

They arrive at floor. Lenny takes a 20 out and hands it to Jeff.

LENNY

Here. Buy a record album or something nice. Keep up the good work.

JEFF

Dad you don't have to do that.

LENNY

Get better. OK?

EXT. TENNIS COURTS - NEXT DAY

Jeff and Dr. Kaplan are playing Tennis.

DR. KAPLAN
How was your dinner with your
family this weekend?

JEFF
What do you think Dr. Kaplan?

Jeff hits ball to Dr. Kaplan.

DR. KAPLAN
I'm a psychiatrist not a mind
reader?

Dr. Kaplan hits it past Jeff with blinding speed.

JEFF
Good one.

DR. KAPLAN
Did you get along with your mom?

JEFF
What do you think?

Hits ball to Dr. Kaplan. Kaplan hits it back.

Mary Ellen shows up on side of court. She looks very
distraught.

MARY ELLEN
Doctor Kaplan, there's been an
emergency.
(to Jeff)
Excuse us Jeff.

Dr. Kaplan walks over to the side of the court. Mary Ellen
talks to him. There is a sudden change of mood as Dr. Kaplan
drops his racket to his side.

DR. KAPLAN
Dear God.

Mary Ellen puts her arm on Dr. Kaplan's shoulder. Dr. Kaplan
covers his face with his left hand.

MARY ELLEN
Jeff. Can you make it back to the
unit.

(MORE)

MARY ELLEN(cont'd)

We're convening a special meeting.
I need to talk to Dr. Kaplan in
private.

JEFF

What happened?

MARY ELLEN

You'll have to wait until the
meeting.

Jeff walks out of frame.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - DAY

All the patients and the staff on duty have been assembled in
the middle of the day for a special meeting. The staff looks
visibly shaken.

TRACY

I'm sure you're all wondering why
we're here.

DR. KAPLAN

We received some bad news earlier
today. Darla Winder's mother
called. She took her own life last
night.

The entire room is silent. Everyone is shocked, from staff to
patients.

DR. KAPLAN

She jumped in front of the El about
3 blocks from where she was living
with her sister.

KELVIN

I just talked to her. She seemed
OK.

MINDI

You know what I think?

KELVIN

Nobody wants to know what you
think, you psycho bitch!!

TYRONE

Kelvin!

DR. KAPLAN

That's OK Tyrone. Kelvin, under the circumstances I'm going to let that slide. But you might want to listen to what she has to say. This is one area Mindi knows something about.

CLOSE-UP OF MINDI'S WRIST. THERE IS A LONG, DIAGONAL SCAR.

MINDI

I'm probably the craziest person here on a floor full of crazy people. But I learned a long time ago that if you keep your feelings bottled up way, deep inside, then you can really go nuts.

TYRONE

That's the most sense you've made since you've been here.

MINDI

So who wants to eat my pussy?

DR. KAZANJIAN

(with a combination of
anger and amusement)

Dear Lord.

The room erupts in laughter.

TRACY

I hate to say this, guys, but we needed that.

The staff and some patients not in agreement.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT LOBBY - NEXT DAY

Standing committee meeting. Present are Dr. Kaplan, Tracy and Jeff.

TRACY

Not much of a turnout today.

Muffled laughter from the group.

DR. KAPLAN

That's understandable under the circumstances.

JEFF

I'm feeling a little weird about this. But I kinda need to get out this weekend. You understand.

DR. KAPLAN

Let me tell you something. In some ways your response is probably healthiest response on the floor. It's preferable to resume life as soon as possible, even while the grieving process goes on.

TRACY

What did you have in mind?

JEFF

I'd like to see the new Woody Allen movie but can I go by myself.

DR. KAPLAN

You are on the committee. Why not?

JEFF

OK then. Woody Allen it is.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - NEXT DAY

Mary Ellen goes into a locked cabinet and brings out a small strong box, which she proceeds to unlock.

MARY ELLEN

Here you go. The rules state that we can't keep the money in here once the weekend starts. So you'll have to hold on to it.

She hands him the strong box.

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Jeff is looking at the money. He puts all bills in his wallet but leaves the change in the bed.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

He comes out of an adult book store

He is in an adult book store looking at books

He is in a bar drinking

He drinks another drink

He stumbles out of the bar

INT. CONTINENTAL TRAILWAYS BUS STATION - DAY

Jeff is at the clerk's window taking money out of his wallet.

CLERK

One way or round trip?

JEFF

Round trip please.

CLERK

Maybe you better get some coffee.
The Burger King is across the
lobby.

JEFF

Thanks.

INT. BUS - LATER

Jeff is sitting on the bus looking out the window.

EXT. WILLIAMSPORT - NIGHT

Jeff is walking up the street to his house.

INT. CUTLER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Jeff walks into the kitchen. Sandy is making a sandwich.

JEFF

Hi mom.

SANDY

Sit. You look hungry.

JEFF

Mom...

SANDY
Shh. You'll wake your father. He
doesn't know you went AWOL.

JEFF
Oh.

SANDY
Don't worry about it. Dr. Kaplan
called. He told me about that girl.
I'm sorry.

JEFF
Thanks.

Sandy gets up and takes a roast chicken out of the
refrigerator.

SANDY
Do you want me to reheat this?

JEFF
No I'll eat it like that. I could
eat a horse. Should I call him?

SANDY
I already did. I thought you might
come here. You took the 4:40?

JEFF
What else is there?

SANDY
You'd think they would add more
buses with all the people that go
to Philly and back each day. Eat. I
need to go to bed.

JEFF
Good night Mom.

SANDY
Good night Jeff. I love you.

JEFF
I...

SANDY
Shhh. Don't force yourself. Daddy
will wake you up at 6 and take you
to the airport. You have an 8
o'clock flight.

INT. LENNY CUTLER'S CAR - DAY

About ten seconds of silence as Lenny and Jeff drive to airport.

INT. LYCOMING COUNTY AIRPORT - MORNING

Lenny walks up and buys a one way ticket to Philadelphia while Jeff sips on a coffee.

LENNY
Here's the ticket.

JEFF
The earache express.

LENNY
Yeah.

JEFF
Dad...

LENNY
I'm not much in the mood for
talking right now.

JEFF
But we need to talk about this.

LENNY
Is that how people act where you're
at? Somebody dies and you go get
drunk. That's not how I was raised.
I saw guys get their heads blown
off in front of me in the war. Did
I go and get drunk and take a bus
to my parent's house. No, sir, I
did not.

JEFF
I'm sorry.

LENNY
Just listen to the doctor. I have
to go to work. Have a safe flight.

Lenny takes two twenty dollar bills out of his wallet.

LENNY

You don't really deserve this, but I don't like to see my son traveling without any money. You go right back to the hospital when you get back. No monkey business, versteh?

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - LATER THAT DAY

Tyrone and Jeff are playing ping pong.

TYRONE

Nobody's really mad at you. I admit it was a bit of a surprise but we're not mad. I might have done the same thing under the circumstances.

JEFF

(serving ball)
Can I ask you something?

TYRONE

(hitting ball back)
Sure Jeff. I don't know if I can answer.

JEFF

Do you get along with your parents?

TYRONE

When I was living with them, not always.

JEFF

That's one to nothing.

TYRONE

Is that spin legal?

JEFF

(serves)
Not when I use it?

TYRONE

Parents pissed?

JEFF

Surprisingly, my mom was cool but my dad was fuming.

TYRONE
I'd beat your butt.

JEFF
He wanted to.

TYRONE
That's 2 to 2. My serve.
(serves ball)

JEFF
I should go AWOL more often. My mom
made a roast chicken.

TYRONE
Next time you have a taste for
roast chicken, please let me know.
I know a nice, cheap place in town.
We need to keep your ass out of
trouble.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Dr. Kaplan and various members of the staff are gathered
around the table. There is coffee and doughnuts on the table.

DR. KAPLAN
Before we go out on the floor I've
got an announcement to make.

The staff nod their heads.

DR. KAPLAN
We're getting a new patient today.

STEVEN LAZARUS is a first year resident. He sports a goatee
and stylish wire rim glasses. He is dressed in a fashionably
casual button down shirt and impeccably pressed khakis.

DR. LAZARUS
Why is that news? Don't we get new
patients every week?

DR. KAPLAN
Mary Ellen, do you remember Ralph
DeVrees.

MARY ELLEN
(with a mixture of disgust
and amusement)
Oh God. I seriously hope you're not
letting Ralph back in here.

TYRONE

DeVrees the Breeze? Lord have mercy.

DR. LAZARUS

Am I missing something here?

TYRONE

Let's just say that with this piece of information, I'm buying a new pair of Adidas tomorrow.

DR. KAPLAN

You better buy them tonight. He'll be here bright and early tomorrow morning.

DR. LAZARUS

Wait a second. The same Ralph DeVrees who tore up the Penn Relays in '75?

TYRONE

One and the same. He made the Olympics but he cracked up two weeks before it started.

MARY ELLEN

I thought he was banned from Pennypacker, Dr. Kaplan?

DR. KAPLAN

He was. They just kicked him out of Haverford. His father paid me a visit today. I couldn't refuse him. He seemed so desperate.

TYRONE

(to Dr. Lazarus)
James DeVrees. President of...

DR. LAZARUS

I know who James DeVrees is. Only the richest man in the Tri State area. What I could do with half his money.

TRACY

So are we getting a new swimming pool, tennis courts? What?

DR. KAPLAN

He may be rich but he came to me as
a father. I had to respect that.

TRACY

I understand.

DR. KAPLAN

Tennis courts.
(smiles)

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

Mary Ellen knocks on Jeff's room. With her is RALPH DEVREES,
a tall patrician looking young man with strawberry blonde
hair and a slight, pathetic suggestion of a moustache. He is
carrying a suitcase.

MARY ELLEN

Jeff, this is...

JEFF

I know who he is. DeVrees the
Breeze.

MARY ELLEN

So you know.

JEFF

Everybody knows. You know how
secrets go around here.

RALPH

Pleased to meet you Jeff. If you
don't mind, just call me Ralph.

MARY ELLEN

I'll let you two get acquainted.
Remember, meds in one hour.

JEFF

Thanks Mary Ann.

RALPH

So what's the action so far?

JEFF

I've got 10 dollars on you bolting
day after tomorrow.

RALPH
You're gonna lose. I'm not bolting
this time. I promised my father.

JEFF
Promises were made to be broken.

Ralph takes off his shoes and lies down in bed.

RALPH
No, really. My dad will kill me if
I get kicked out of here. I have
nowhere else to go.

JEFF
(smiles)
Tyrone is just waiting for the
first time you try to go AWOL.
There all watching you.

RALPH
They can watch all they want.

INT. GOLD'S GYM - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

Tyrone is furiously working out on the treadmill.

He is furiously working on the speed bag.

He is furiously lifting weights.

He is furiously jumping rope

TYRONE
(profusely sweating)
Let him try and run on me this
time. I'm ready for him.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. KAPLAN
May I share something?

JEFF
Do I have a choice?

DR. KAPLAN
You always have a choice.

JEFF
Give it your best shot.

DR. KAPLAN
You're the oldest child right?

JEFF
Yes.

DR. KAPLAN
Whenever your mom sees you she sees
her hopes and dreams being dashed.

JEFF
So you're saying she blames me for
dropping out of law school.

DR. KAPLAN
Well, not consciously, but that's
the gist. Yes.

JEFF
Yeh. Makes sense but it doesn't
hurt any less.

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - NEXT DAY

Ralph is lacing up his sneakers and doing stretching
exercises.

JEFF
Oh My God!!!

RALPH
What?

JEFF
You're doing it aren't you?

RALPH
Whatever do you mean?

JEFF
This is the day. You're bolting
today. Aren't you?

RALPH
You're nuts. I stretch every day.
It keeps the cobwebs away.

JEFF

Don't bullshit me. I can see that look in your eye. You're just like Big Chief just before he suffocated McMurphy and threw the water cooler out the window in "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest."

RALPH

You belong in that movie. Cause you're totally nuts. I'm just getting ready for my usual day.

Ralph finishes lacing up his running shoes.

INT. CHUCK'S ROOM

Jeff sticks his head in Chuck's room.

JEFF

He's going today.

CHUCK

Get the fuck out of here.

JEFF

I'm not shitting you. He's going. I can sense it.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

There is an air of excitement. All the staff have brand new sneakers. Even the cleaning lady has new kicks.

TYRONE

(to himself)

Give it your best shot punk.

DR. KAPLAN

I just heard a rumor that Ralph is going AWOL today. Is that true Ralph?

TYRONE

Dr. Kaplan, I don't think Ralph is stupid enough to try it. He knows he'll be on Special for the rest of his time here.

Tyrone shoots Ralph a look that if it were a laser it would pierce the toughest steel.

RALPH

For once I agree with Tyrone. Why would I sacrifice for my freedom just for the thrill of being known as the fastest person ever to set put in Pennypacker.

They both eye each other like in the Clint Eastwood spaghetti westerns.

DR. KAPLAN

Well if nobody has anything to add, it's 9 am and morning meeting is officially over.

CUT TO:

Shot of Tyrone.

TYRONE

Ralph. What say you and I go for a walk?

The whole place gets quiet. Like in a saloon in a western, when the bad guy walks through the double doors.

RALPH

Sure Tyrone. I could use some air.

Suddenly everyone runs to the window. They know the showdown is about to commence. Maryellen glances at Dr. Kaplan. He gives her a grave nod, not unlike the Sheriff in said western making sure the two gunfighters get their space.

EXT. SOUTH FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

Tyrone and Ralph enter South Field. There is a trumpet sound not unlike that which is sounded at the beginning of a bullfight. At this point fantasy shots will be intercut with reality shots to connote a bullfight. On one level the dynamic between Ralph and Tyrone is very funny. On another level it is deadly serious.

CUT TO:

Shot of Tyrone as a bullfighter in a stadium in old Mexico.

CUT TO:

The stands. Dr. Kaplan and the staff are dressed as dignitaries in turn of the century Mexico, with the epaulets, the hat. The whole shebang.

The nurses are dressed as noblewomen. Tracy has a rose in her mouth. She takes it out and throws it at the Bullfighter.

CUT TO:

The other side of the stands are the patients, who look an awful lot like Mexican peasants at the turn of the century. Mindi stands up.

MINDI
Death to the bullfighter!!!

Mindi lights a cigarette. The other peasants stare at her incredulously. She shrugs.

CUT TO:

We are back in present day reality. Shot of Ralph, who snorts like a bull.

RALPH
Snort!!

TYRONE
I'm going to the bathroom. Can I trust you?

The game is on.

RALPH
(smirks)
Sure.

Tyrone goes inside.

CUT TO:

The staff and patients are glued against the window.

EVERYBODY
OOOOOOOHH!!!

They ooh with excitement.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH FIELD - DAY

As soon as Tyrone walks inside, Ralph bolts towards the wall. Tyrone rushes out the door. There is the sound of Spanish guitar music in the background.

CUT TO:

EXT. BULLFIGHT - DAY

Tyrone as matador chases down the bull but the bull eludes his sword no matter how hard he thrusts.

CUT TO:

Ralph heads toward the wall. Tyrone can't catch him. Ralph leaps over the wall.

CUT TO:

EXT. BULLFIGHT - AFTERNOON

The bull gores the matador as the camera pans to the shocked El Presidente and his crowd. The peasants cheer.

CUT TO:

Tyrone falls to the ground in defeat.

CUT TO:

Ralph running down the street to the El.

CUT TO:

Ralph is now at the entrance of the El. He pays his fare and walks on to the platform. Pan to Tracy's car at the bottom of stairs with an intense Tracy in car. Pan back to platform. Tyrone is on platform.

TYRONE
Going somewhere?

CUT TO:

EXT. BULLFIGHT - AFTERNOON

The matador, bleeding and hurt triumphs over the dead bull. The senorita throws out the flower. The peasants walk out in disgust.

MINDI
I want my money back.

She takes another drag of her cigarette the puts it out on the ground with her foot. The other peasants look at her as if to say, "Whatever".

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT LOBBY - NEXT DAY

Yet another standing committee meeting.

JEFF

Roxy Music is in town. They're playing at the Tower. Any hands?

ANNE

Roxy who?

KELVIN

I've never heard of them.

JEFF

I guess I can't go then.

DR. KAPLAN

You go ahead. How many times have you told me they're your favorite band?

TRACY

Doctor...do you think that's a good...

Doctor Kaplan and Tyrone nod silently, knowingly at each other.

TYRONE

No, Tracy. This will be good for Jeff.

Tracy signals an "I get it" look at both men.

TRACY

Ahhh. You go, Jeff. They're your favorite band.

JEFF

OK. It's settled. I'll go get the tickets today.

DR. KAPLAN

I'll give the staff the order.

JEFF

Thanks Dr. Kaplan.

DR. KAPLAN

I hereby order everybody, staff and patients to have a good weekend.

Tyrone gets up. It is at this time that we see Tyrone has a pronounced limp. Dr. Kaplan leaves.

TYRONE
You can say that again.

EXT. KENSINGTON FLOP HOUSE - DAY

Ralph is smoking a cigarette and reading a book. A big fat rat is sitting in the corner, staring benignly at Ralph.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - LATE AFTERNOON

It is early evening. Jeff is dressed in a T-shirt and jeans for the concert. He walks up to the nurses station to sign out.

MARY ELLEN
Big night huh?

JEFF
Yeh, I haven't been to a concert in ages.

MARY ELLEN
I've been to the Tower. I saw Bob Marley there in 76.

JEFF
(genuinely excited)
The first show or the second show?

MARY ELLEN
Second show.

JEFF
I was at that show. I was higher than anever mind.

MARY ELLEN
(grins)
You can't go see Bob Marley and not do the ganga. C'mon.

JEFF
Cool.

MARY ELLEN
We do have lives outside of here, you know.

(MORE)

MARY ELLEN(cont'd)

Everyone wants to believe staff and patients are so different. We're not that different.

JEFF

I know you're a hippie chick from way back.

Mary Ellen hands Jeff the excursion money.

JEFF

This is too much. I just need transportation money.

MARY ELLEN

Sorry, we can't keep it here. You know the deal. As the reigning head of Standing Committee you're responsible for it.

Suddenly Mary Ellen seems to grow larger and the money seems to glow.

MARY ELLEN

(continued)

What are you worried for? It's not like you're being tested by God.

She laughs a demonic laugh as she grows even larger. Fangs now show through her mouth.

JEFF

Well, I better go now.

Jeff is pale white.

Mary Ellen is back to normal now.

MARY ELLEN

Are you OK, Jeff?

JEFF

I'm fine.

MARY ELLEN

Have a nice time at the concert.

JEFF

Thanks.

INT. MARKET STREET EL - NIGHT

Jeff is sitting pensively.

EXT. MARKET STREET EL STOP UPPER DARBY - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

Jeff walks out of the El stop at 69th street.

He walks up the street towards the Tower Theater, which easily could be the Rialto, the State, the Strand or any grand old movie theater in anytown U.S.A.

Jeff walks into the Tower.

INT. TOWER THEATER CONCERT AREA - NIGHT

The house lights are on. It is a festive atmosphere. Frisbees and balloons fill the air.

INT. TOWER THEATER - NIGHT

It's the middle of the show. Jeff is having a great time. He's in the bathroom. Someone offers him a joint.

JEFF

I'm cool man. Thanks.

DUDE

No problem guy.

Jeff walks out into the Lobby of the Tower.

LISA MENDELSSOHN is 21 with a face most men would kill for. She was Jeff's girlfriend at boarding school. She is by the concession stand.

LISA

Oh my god!!! Look who it is.

She and Jeff hug.

JEFF

Lisa. I didn't expect to see you here.

LISA

Nor did I. How are you? How long's it been?

JEFF
I haven't seen you since summer
before you went to college.

LISA
I heard about the...
(grasping for words)

JEFF
Don't sweat it, Lees. Most people
have a hard time talking about it.

LISA
You look pretty normal to me.

JEFF
Thanks. Great show, heh?

LISA
It is so good to see you. There's a
diner across the street. Let's meet
there after the show.
(she kisses him on the
lips)
And maybe after...who knows?

JEFF
OK. Date.

LISA
See you then. Enjoy the rest of the
show.

Jeff walks back to his seat. He looks like he has the weight
of the world of his shoulders.

EXT. TOWER THEATER - NIGHT

Jeff exits the theater with a sea of people in a drug induced
haze. He crosses the street to the diner. He hesitates.

INT. EL CAR - NIGHT

Jeff is sitting silently, reading a Roxy Music concert
program.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Waitress comes up to Lisa.

WAITRESS

I guess you're friend ain't comin',
eh hon?

LISA

Doesn't look that way. I'll have
the rice pudding and coffee. Could
I have.....

WAITRESS

(interrupts as if it's her
job, which it is)
Whipped cream? Sure, coming right
up. Men!!!

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - NIGHT

Maryellen is in Nurse's Station doing crossword puzzle. Bell
rings. Jeff shows up to sign in.

JEFF

Hey.

MARY ELLEN

Hey yourself.

JEFF

What are you doing here? Shouldn't
you be home?

MARY ELLEN

The night nurse cancelled on us. So
I had to stay. Concert good?

JEFF

Excellent.

MARY ELLEN

See anybody you know?

JEFF

Yeh, my ex girlfriend.

MARY ELLEN

Oh? Care to talk about it?

JEFF

Nah.

MARY ELLEN

I'm proud of you.

Mary Ellen gives Jeff a sister/mother hug.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - THE FOLLOWING MONDAY

Morning meeting. KATE HANAFEE, a new patient, sits by Dr. Kaplan. She is a fresh-faced, red-headed 22 year old Irish American girl of most boy's dreams.

DR. KAZANJIAN
Good morning everybody.

EVERYBODY
Good morning Dr. Kazanjian.

Whimsy permeates the air.

DR. KAZANJIAN
This is Kate. Our new patient.

EVERYBODY
Hi Kate!!!

DR. KAZANJIAN
OK gang. Let's not get carried away.

TRACY
Kate, what brings you to our neck of the woods?

DR. KAPLAN
Kate's from Boston.

KATE
They'll heah my ahccent soon enough.

Everybody laughs.

DR. KAPLAN
Kate transferred from McClain in Boston. I just wanted to get the group up to speed. Go ahead, sorry.

KATE
I was doing OK but my doctor felt that I had reached an impasse. You guys may not know this but the Young Adult unit has a national reputation.

JEFF
 (to Kelvin)
 We like her, don't we?

KELVIN
 Oh yes. We like her.

TRACY
 Do you fellas have something to
 share with the group.

JEFF
 Tracy, Kelvin and I were just
 saying how impressed we were that
 the Young Adult Unit has such a
 sterling reputation.

KELVIN
 I do concur.

Kelvin strokes his chin. Tracy has that look that says, "I'm
 not buying it but if you wanna go ahead and sell it, don't
 let me stop you"

TRACY
 Ah. I see.

DR. KAPLAN
 Why don't we go around and
 introduce ourselves?

Shot of clock. It is 9:12.

KELVIN
 Hi Kate. Pleased to meet you. I'm
 the resident stud here. Let me know
 if you need a real man.

DR. KAPLAN
 Somebody wants to get on special
 real quick.

CUT TO:

Shot of clock. It is now 9:20.

TYRONE
 And last but not least we have our
 resident comedian. Jeff.

KATE
 (with not a little sex)
 Hi Jeff.

Tracy looks at Tyrone like "Oh my God, did you see that.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. KAPLAN
What do you think of the new
patient?

JEFF
She's very hot.

DR. KAPLAN
Yes I think you'd have to be crazy
not to be aroused by Kate.

JEFF
Is it my imagination or did you
just make a mental hospital joke?

DR. KAPLAN
It's your imagination.

Giggles.

JEFF
I was thinking of asking her out
for a movie. Is that kosher?

DR. KAPLAN
As soon as she gets her privileges,
you can do anything you like.

JEFF
Anything?

DR. KAPLAN
Now, as your doctor I must caution
you that getting close with other
patients is usually not a great
idea, for all kinds of reasons.

JEFF
I hear ya, Doctor Kaplan.

DR. KAPLAN
But as a man, I can clearly see she
likes you. Go for it.

JEFF
I can't believe I'm hearing this.

DR. KAPLAN
You're not hearing this. You
follah?

JEFF
Nice "Sting" reference.

DR. KAPLAN
I save them for our appointments.

JEFF
It's appreciated.

DR. KAPLAN
As your doctor, I must ask you to
use a condom.

JEFF
And where do I get a condom? They
don't exactly sell them at the
snack bar.

DR. KAPLAN
Then I suggest you schedule your
first "date" near a drug store. You
follah?

JEFF
One reference an appointment,
Doctor.

DR. KAPLAN
Sorry. But just in case you don't
get to a drugstore, here.

Dr. Kaplan gets a condom out of his wallet.

JEFF
Thanks. I assume I get special for
life if I get caught.

DR. KAPLAN
(deadpan)
Try death.

JEFF
Gotcha.

INT. RECREATION AREA - DAY

Kate and Jeff are playing ping-pong.

JEFF
I was wondering if you'd like
to.....

KATE
Go out. I'd love to.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - DAY

Mary Ellen is signing Jeff and Kate out on their T.R.A. She has a worried look on her face.

MARY ELLEN
Jeff, may I speak with you alone
for a sec?

JEFF
Sure, what's up?

Jeff sits down in the nurse's station. Kate, understanding the way things work, nods to Jeff. She sits down on a neighboring chair.

KATE
I'll be right here.

JEFF
Just be a sec.

Mary Ellen closes the door.

MARY ELLEN
I want you to know some of us were
concerned that this maybe is not
the greatest of ideas.

JEFF
I spoke to Dr. Kaplan. He cleared
it. Why should it be a problem?

MARY ELLEN
I hear ya. But some of us think
it's too soon.

JEFF
Is there something you're not
telling me?

MARY ELLEN
Can you keep a secret? And I mean
not in a million years do you
breathe a word to one soul.

JEFF

Sure.

MARY ELLEN

I mean it. This could be my job.

JEFF

OK, so spill.

MARY ELLEN

The grapevine tells me that Kate had an affair with her doctor at McClean and that's why she was transferred here.

JEFF

I've heard something like that. I'll be careful. I'm just looking for somebody other than the usual suspects to talk to. That's all.

MARY ELLEN

(looking somewhat
relieved)

I'm glad to hear that.

JEFF

So we cool? I have a hot date.

MARY ELLEN

One more thing.

(goes into her purse and
pulls out a condom)

Just in case you decide to take a
detour.

(puts it in his hand)

Jeff is amused.

JEFF

That's OK, I have one.

MARY ELLEN

The grapevine also tells me that Dr. Kaplan buys his condoms at a discount store. This is lambskin, top shelf.

JEFF

I'm not even going to touch that.

MARY ELLEN
Not without a condom you don't.

CUT TO:

SHOT of the Market Street el. Kate and Jeff are seen from The outside going into town.

CUT TO:

INT. MARKET STREET EL - DAY

Kate and Jeff are having a conversation. Although it is late morning The El is packed. It is a very diverse crowd, including blacks, whites, men, woman, all ages, all economic backgrounds.

KATE
I love the feel of the city.

JEFF
You're a city girl, right?

KATE
Yep. Southie born and raised.

JEFF
So you're Irish.

KATE
I guess you couldn't tell with the name Fitzpatrick, eh.

JEFF
You got me there.

KATE
I'm just kidding.

JEFF
My doctor gave me a condom.

KATE
Mine did too.

Both take them out at the same time.

JEFF
You thinking what I'm thinking?

KATE
Great minds think alike.

The train stops at 40th street. They both throw it out on the platform. An OLD BLACK WOMAN looks up from her book and scoffs at them. A YOUNG WHITE MALE picks them both up off the floor.

YOUNG WHITE MALE
Thanks, man.

Door closes.

KATE
I'm glad that's out of the way.

JEFF
Me too.

KATE
Of course, there's always rough sex.

Old woman looks up from her book again, shakes her head, and goes back to what she was doing.

JEFF
So have you decided what you wanted to do?

KATE
Well, Brett the author hasn't decided on a time of year yet.

JEFF
Give the guy a break. It's only his first draft.

KATE
Don't you think that figuring out time of year is of utmost importance.

JEFF
Careful. You don't want to get the author mad at you.

KATE
Yeh, what's he gonna do?

JEFF
He could turn you into a chicken.

Kate is now a fox.

KATE
 (as fox)
 Growl!!!

JEFF
 Or a fox. A fox works. You are one.

KATE
 Thanks.

JEFF
 (relieved)
 Whew!!

KATE
 Thanks Brett. Just kidding.

BRETT
 (O.S)
 I know. I wrote you with a sense of
 humor.

KATE
 And big boobs.

BRETT
 (O.S.)
 I can make em smaller.

Jeff makes that comic pantomime found in every Woody Allen
 movie. The one where he's silently mouthing the word no.

KATE
 I'm good.

Jeff mimes "thank you"

EXT. CITY HALL PHILADELPHIA - DAY

Jeff and Kate exit by a sculpture that looks like a giant
 clothespin.

KATE
 Hey. What's this?

JEFF
 People call it "The Clothespin",
 but that's not it's real name.

KATE
 You gonna tell me what it's called?

JEFF
Stand over here for a sec.

Kate walks over to where Jeff is standing.

KATE
Oh cool. They're kissing.

JEFF
Very perceptive. It's called "The
Kiss", by Claes Oldeburg.

They both look at each other. It looks like they might kiss.
Instead she reaches over and squeezes his hand.

CUT TO:

SHOT OF THEM WALKING DOWN the STREET.

INT. BAGEL NOSH - LUNCH TIME

Kate and Jeff are in line at Bagel Nosh, a popular Center City eatery. It is crowded with the typical mix of white collar workers you might see in any downtown area at lunchtime.

KATE
Wow. Where did you hear about this?
It's killah.

JEFF
Is that a Boston expression?

KATE
Sure.

JEFF
I have a confession.

KATE
What's that?

JEFF
I lived in Boston briefly.

KATE
No way!!

JEFF
Yeppir.

KATE
I didn't know that. Where?

JEFF
Back Bay.

KATE
Cool.

Eats her sandwich.

JEFF
What do you feel like doing?

She motions that she's eating.

JEFF
(continued)
Sorry.

KATE
Gmdmzffzzz.

They both laugh.

JEFF
So what do you want to do now?

KATE
You're the one who knows Philly.
You've been here for a year now?

JEFF
OK I think I have something in
mind. You ready?

KATE
Sure.

EXT. BAGEL NOSH - DAY

Jeff and Kate hail a cab. One stops. They get in.

EXT. FAIRMOUNT PARK DAY

The cab pulls up in the middle of Fairmount Park. Jeff gives the driver a 20. JIMMY D'AMICO is a middle aged Italian\American with a slight paunch that is visible even in the driver's seat.

JEFF
Can you keep the motor running.

JIMMY
Hey keep your money. We'll settle
up when we're done.

Cabbie returns Jeff his money.

JEFF
Thanks.

JIMMY
I normally would take the money but
you got an honest face.

KATE
What's next?

JEFF
Follow me.

Kate follows Jeff to a long stone bench.

KATE
What are we doing?

JEFF
Just....

Gives her that little kid, C'mon just trust me, look.

KATE
OK.

JEFF
Sit there. Please.

KATE
OK. This better be good.

CLOSE-UP OF JEFF

Jeff whispers, barely audible.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP OF KATE

JEFF

(O.S.)

What do you want to do now?

KATE

Oh my god!! How did you do that?

JEFF

You can whisper.

KATE

(whispering)

That's great.

JEFF

It's called the whispering benches.
It was built for the Centennial
Celebration. Over there is
Centennial Hall.

Jeff points.

KATE

Neat.

INT. CAB - DAY

JIMMY

The Whispering Benches. Lemme
guess. Youse had lunch in Center
City and the boyfriend wanted to
surprise you with the Whispering
Benches.

JEFF

I'm not her boyfriend.

LOUIE

OK. So she's cheating on her
husband.

JEFF

No, first date.

JIMMY

That's different. Allow me.

JEFF
Where we going.
(cab pulls off)

JIMMY
Don't worry, young lovers. If you
don't like it it's free. Fair.

KATE
OK.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA ZOO - DAY

Cab pulls up to the entrance.

JIMMY
Am I good or what?

JEFF
This is perfect.

JIMMY
Allow me to introduce myself. Jimmy
D'amico.

JEFF
Jeff.

KATE
Kate.

JIMMY
Why don't I swing back in 3 hours?
Is that enough time?

Jeff and Kate give each other a furtive look.

KATE
Not sure that's a good idea.

Louie hands them his card.

JIMMY
Look. Here's what you do. There's
the company's number. When you're
ready you call. If you want me you
ask for me. Otherwise, no hard
feelings? Understood?

KATE
Yeh. That's good Louie. Thanks.

The two get out of the cab.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

JEFF

And then we went to the zoo. All in all it was a perfect day.

DR. KAPLAN

Except you didn't have sex.

JEFF

And we're not going oo.

DR. KAPLAN

You had that much of a discussion?

JEFF

Not in so many words.

Jeff stops and stares at the floor sadly.

DR. KAPLAN

What's up?

JEFF

That I'd like to not be in the hospital next time I meet a girl like her.

DR. KAPLAN

Go on.

JEFF

I mean most guys my age are in college and dating. What am I doing?

DR. KAPLAN

Most guys haven't been through what you've been through. Don't be so hard on yourself.

JEFF

I can't help what I feel.

DR. KAPLAN

So do something about it. Make a goal and stick to it.

JEFF

I want to be out of here by my 21st birthday. How's that sound?

DR. KAPLAN

I'll do what I can to help you.

INT. MORNING MEETING - TWO DAYS LATER

DR KAZANJIAN

Good morning everyone. We have some good news. Kate? You want to tell us?

KATE

I will be getting discharged tomorrow.

TRACY

That was quick. Are you sure you're ready.

KATE

My doctor thinks I'm ready. He felt that in my case the sooner I can go back to college and resume my life, the better.

DR. KAPLAN

Everyone will continue to have issues after they get out of here so for some it makes sense to not get too comfortable.

TYRONE

Keep in touch.

DR. LAZARUS

Jeff would you care to add anything.

JEFF

Not really.

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Kate knocks. Jeff's reading. It's a little after lunch.

KATE

Can I come in?

JEFF
Sure. You're welcome anytime.

KATE
You seem a little down. Is it me?

JEFF
No. Just having an off day.

KATE
C'mon. Talk to to me.

JEFF
Why would it be you?

KATE
It just seems like your mood
changed when I made the
announcement.

Jeff puts down this book.

JEFF
When were you going to tell me? Was
I going to get a postcard after you
left?

KATE
Now that's not fair. I just made my
decision yesterday.

JEFF
I'm sorry. It's not you, really. I
just hate seeing everyone else
leaving. It's like the world is
passing me by.

KATE
You have to do things at your own
pace. You know?

JEFF
What does that mean exactly? Am I a
horse?

KATE
Now don't get smart with me,
buster.

JEFF
I will if I want to, wench.

KATE
We'll see about that.

The two start to wrestle playfully, more like bear cubs on a National Geographic special than anything of a sexual nature.

Tyrone and Tracy walk in.

TYRONE AND TRACY TOGETHER
Look what we have here.

Tracy goes to pull Kate off of Jeff.

TRACY
Somebody get the hose.

JEFF
What? We weren't doing anything.

TYRONE
That's not what it looked like to me.

TRACY
Unbelievable.

TYRONE
You guys really blew it this time. We were coming in to say that Dr. Kaplan approved of you going out for a few hours. To get your good-byes in.

TRACY
Looks like you were one step ahead of us.

JEFF
Waita sec. That's not what happened. She came in and asked me what was wrong and we just got to joking.

TYRONE
Jeff, how long have you been here on the floor? You know the rules, man.

JEFF
I don't see what that has to do with it.

TYRONE
It has everything to do with it.

JEFF
This is such bullshit.
(getting heated up)

KATE
Calm down. It's not worth it.

JEFF
(to Tyrone)
You're just pissed cause you and
Tracy broke up and you ain't
getting none.

TRACY
That is none of your goddamn
business.

TYRONE
Let me get out of here before I get
in trouble.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - NEXT DAY

There is a banner that reads "Best of Luck Kate" hanging on
the wall. People are having ice cream and cake in the dining
room.

KATE
Has anyone seen Jeff?

TYRONE
He didn't go to morning meeting
this morning.

KATE
Do you think it will be OK if I say
goodbye to him.

TRACY
No. It's against the rules.
(smiles)
Go ahead.

INT. JEFF'S ROOM - DAY

Kate comes in.

KATE
Hey stranger.

JEFF
So today's the big day, huh?

KATE
You're taking this pretty hard.

JEFF
I told you, it's me. It's not you.

KATE
I know, but you should let my
leaving inspire you, not depress
you.

JEFF
Good luck.

Tracy is at the door.

(continued)
May I give her a hug?

TRACY
Now, come on! We're not that bad
here.

JEFF
Not sure about that.

TRACY
Hug window closing. Cloooosinnng.

JEFF
OK. Cmere you.

Kate and Jeff hug.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Jeff is looking dishevelled.

DR. KAPLAN
I'm a little concerned about your
hygiene.

JEFF
I'm fine.

DR. KAPLAN

I'm going to have to draw a line here. If you're not clean and clean shaven tomorrow, we meet on the floor. Case closed. My nose, and my furniture, can only take so much.

JEFF

Fine.

DR. KAPLAN

Fine.

NURSES STATION - NEXT DAY

Staff meeting.

TYRONE

That man is ripe. We need to hose him down like in the movies "snake-pit" movies.

TRACY

C'mon, Tyrone. We've had worst.

TYRONE

I could understand it if he was a slob even. But he's the cleanest one here. Or was.

MARY ELLEN

Maybe we should up his meds.

DR. KAPLAN

That would only put him on the defensive. He needs to work this out himself.

TRACY

I was thinking.

TYRONE

Uh-oh. That's dangerous.

TRACY

Tyrone!

DR. KAPLAN

I'll take any suggestions any day of the week. What did you have in mind?

TRACY

Tyrone and I went to this new comedy club the other night. What was it called?

"Oooohs" and "ahhhs" from other staff.

TYRONE

You people have dirty minds. We decided to stay friends. Get your minds out of the gutter.

TRACY

I remember. The place was called the Comedy Hutch, close to Drexel.

DR. LAZARUS

I've heard of it. A bunch of local comics started their own club when they couldn't find work any where else.

TRACY

When we were there the emcee announced that the club was starting an open mike in two weeks.

DR. KAPLAN

Go on. I like where your going with this.

DR. KAZANJIAN

Me too.

TRACY

People. Hello!!! Who's the funniest person on the unit?

MARY ELLEN

Eunice, the cleaning lady?

TRACY

Patient!! Who's the funniest patient?

EVERYBODY

Jeff!!!

DR. KAPLAN

Eureka!!

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. KAPLAN

So what do you think? If you clean up we'll let you go. This is right up your alley.

JEFF

I guess I have an appointment with a bar of soap. Can't wait to talk about this shit-hole.

DR. KAPLAN

That's the thing, Jeff. We discussed this in staff meeting and we all think you should avoid talking about the hospital.

JEFF

That sucks.

DR. KAPLAN

This is an excellent chance for some resocialization here Jeff. You're a smart guy. Talk about current events. Your family.

JEFF

I'll give it a shot.

MARKET STREET EL - NIGHT

TYRONE

You psyched, dude?

JEFF

Yeh.

TYRONE

I tell ya, man. It takes a lot of balls to go down there in front of people you don't even know.

JEFF

Thanks. So, we cool?

TYRONE

Ain't nuthin' but a thang.

They high five.

INT. COMEDY HUTCH LOBBY - NIGHT

The atmosphere is buzzing with excitement. Over 100 people are there to sign up. A tough looking Irish guy in his late 30's saunters into the crowd. He is the manager of The Comedy Hutch. His name is SHAWN MCGUINNESS.

SHAWN

Thanks for coming out tonight. I'm Shawn. I manage this place. Wow. This is an amazing turnout for our first ever open mike here at the Comedy Hutch. I need everybody to file into the club area in an orderly fashion. I need to make a few announcements.

INT. COMEDY HUTCH MAIN CLUB - NIGHT

SHAWN

Hey.

CROWD

Hey.

SHAWN

Nice crowd.

Shawn is at the mike on the stage. It is your basic comedy club stage with the red brick background and the name of the comedy club, "The Comedy hutch" on the brick in loud yellow lettering.

SHAWN

OK gang. Here's the deal. There's too many of you here tonight. So here's what we're gonna do. I'm sending around a note pad. Everyone is to put down their name. I know this sounds a little corny but we're going to pick your name out of a hat. If you get picked for tonight, then you go on tonight.. If not we put you down for next week. It's that simple. After next week we will only take the first 25 people. So come early. It will make all of our lives a little easier.

EXT. COMEDY HUTCH - NIGHT

Jeff and Tyrone are seen coming out of the club.

TYRONE

Sorry you didn't get picked. But you got the excursion for next week. So come next week.

JEFF

Thanks for coming down.

TYRONE

Sure, man. Listen, I know this great pizza place two blocks from here. My treat.

JEFF

I'm starved.

INT. COMEDY HUTCH - NIGHT

It is the following week. Jeff has made it down for the next week. He's by himself. Two guys are sitting next to Jeff in the club. They're names are BRIAN TIMMONEY and STEVE TALARICO.

STEVE

Hi kind stranger. My friend and I are from the planet
(makes a sound like a
beaver on quaaludes)
Frommmmdkdlmppszz.

JEFF

I see.

BRIAN

He doesn't believe us.

STEVE

We also go by the name "Earl".

JEFF

Ah, a comedy team named Earl. That'll go over.

STEVE

We like him.

BRIAN
Yes, we like him.

Shawn comes out on stage. Everybody quiets down.

SHAWN
OK people. This is how it goes
down. If you think you're funny, we
can't wait to see you prove it. If
you're boss or co-workers think
you're funny then go home because
they're never a good judge. Go
home.

Two people leave.

SHAWN
Oh my god. I can't believe two
people left.
(yells out door)
People, I was only joking.

He waits a second.

SHAWN
OK. They're not coming back. That's
good. They didn't have the balls to
stay. Fuckem.

The comics laugh.

SHAWN
Seriously, gang. Here's the rules.
You get 5 minutes. If you're doing
really well, we'll let you go for a
little longer. If not, Larry, show
them what happens.

Larry flicks the flashlight.

SHAWN
If Larry flicks the flashlight,
that's a polite signal to get off.
Larry show the nice people what
happens the second time.

Larry turns of the spotlight on the stage.

SHAWN
Subtle, ain't we?

Comics laugh.

SHAWN
Profanity is allowed to a degree.
But, people, let's use our heads.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. KAPLAN
How did it go?

JEFF
Went pretty well. I didn't do that
great but it was fun.

DR. KAPLAN
That's nice. As I said before, this
is more of a social activity than
anything else.

JEFF
I have to write more material. You
have to stay fresh.

DR. KAPLAN
You sound like you're really taking
this seriously. That's good.

JEFF
I like it.

EXT. COMEDY HUTCH - NIGHT

It is early. Just Brian, Steve, and Jeff are there.

BRIAN
Hey, look who the cat drug in.

STEVE
Liked your set. Much better than
ours.

JEFF
You kidding? You guys are awesome.

STEVE
Thanks.

JEFF
"Orgasm to Go" was awesome. Just
awesome.

STEVE
I liked your bit about "White Guys
Without Girlfriends".

Brian, who's the crazier of the two, does Jeff's bit right in
the middle of the sidewalk.

BRIAN
I just joined a support group.
White guys without girlfriends. OK,
Flyers Home game.

STEVE
Brilliant, Jeff. Absolutely
brilliant.

BRIAN
The two of us are going for a drink
after the show. We'd like if you
joined us.

JEFF
Sorry, guys. Work in the morning.

BRIAN
Oooh. Work.

STEVE
Oooh ah icky pooh.

BRIAN
What did you say you did Jeff?

JEFF
I'd have to kill you if I told you.

Both guys laugh.

STEVE
Just awesome. This guys a genius.

BRIAN
A motherfucking genius.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - NEXT DAY

DR. KAPLAN
How is comedy going?

JEFF

Not bad, Doctor. These two guys
asked me to join them for a drink.
I politely declined.

DR. KAPLAN

I'm glad you did.

Laughs a mock-condescending laugh.

JEFF

Me too.

DR. KAPLAN

I wanted to talk to you about
something. Next week is the end of
your last commitment period. I've
decided not to renew.

JEFF

Yes!

DR. KAPLAN

You've come a long way. You've done
all the hard work. I've been
thinking. It's been a long time
since you've seen your parents. If
your father wanted to pay for you
to take the plane up for a weekend
pass, I wouldn't mind.

JEFF

Not the bus?

DR. KAPLAN

Let's not tempt fate Jeff. You know
what happened last time.

JEFF

OK.

EXT. PENNYPACKER INSTITUTE - FRIDAY

Jeff is walking out of the main entrance with his bags.
Tyrone is with him. A cab pulls up. It is Steve from the
comedy club.

STEVE

Hey look who it is.

He gets out and helps Jeff with his bags.

JEFF
What's up?

STEVE
Not much. Where to?

JEFF
Airport.

STEVE
This is where you work?

Tyrone says nothing.

JEFF
Steve, I live here. I'm a patient.

Steve is visibly uncomfortable.

STEVE
No..problem man...The airport it
is.

Jeff gets in the cab. Cab pulls out into the street.

EXT. LYCOMING COUNTY AIRPORT - DAY

A dinky little Allegheny Commuter turbo-prop touches down on an air strip only slightly bigger than a football field.

INT. LYCOMING COUNTY AIRPORT - DAY

Jeff walks into the terminal, where Lenny and Sandy are waiting for him.

SANDY
How was your trip?

Gives Jeff a very pursed lip kiss.

JEFF
OK Mom. Hey Dad.

LENNY
Look at you. You look great.

JEFF
Thanks.

LENNY

You hungry? Mom made a roast, a turkey and soup. Hope you brought your appetite.

JEFF

Sure did.

INT. THE CUTLER HOUSE - LATER

The Cutlers are having dinner. Everyone is there. In addition to Lenny, Sandy, Gary and Lisa are also Jeff's big sister CATHY and his other brother STEVE.

STEVE

So, how are things at the nut-house?

LENNY

Steven Jerome Cutler! There's no call for that! Could you pass the roast beef, Lisa?

GARY

Pass the roast beef to Dad.

STEVE

Jeff knows I was joking.

GARY

I'll get them.

JEFF

That's great. Didn't you get some awards last year?

GARY

I'll show them to you.

Gary gets up and goes upstairs.

SANDY

Come back here young man. He can look at your trophies after dinner.

Gary is already upstairs.

CATHY

Listen, some of my friends and I are going out. Do you wanna come? Cindy might be joining us.

SANDY

Honey, Jeff doesn't need any excitement right now.

JEFF

Mom, quit trying to protect me. Dr. Kaplan says you're ashamed of me. That's why you keep me from things.

SANDY

And this doctor, he knows everything eh?

JEFF

He knows a lot.

SANDY

(changes the subject)

Have you seen any good movies lately?

JEFF

Quit changing the subject, Mom.

LENNY

Let it go. Yo can't change her.

JEFF

Well someone has to change. Why do you think I'm the way I am. Because of you and Mom.

LENNY

We try our best Son.

GARY

(back from his room with trophies)

Here you go.

JEFF

Neat. What's this one for.

GARY

This one is for the regionals. And this one was for the States.

LENNY

OK. That's enough. Gary take those back upstairs. Now. C'mon pal, we're here for Jeff today.

GARY

You never let me do anything!

JEFF

That's OK Gary. I'll look at them later. Just put them in the hallway for now. Is that OK, Dad?

LENNY

Whatever.

Gary takes trophies out of the dining room.

STEVE

Jeff. I hear you had a girlfriend up there.

JEFF

Not really. We went out once.

STEVE

Do you hear from her?

JEFF

I got a card from her once. Nothing since then.

STEVE

I got accepted into Princeton and Cornell.

JEFF

Mazel Tov!

STEVE

But I think I'm going to Dickinson instead.

JEFF

That's a good school. One of the better liberal arts colleges in the country isn't it?

SANDY

You'll go where we pay for you to go. And we're not having that discussion right now. This is Jeff's night.

LENNY

Mr. artsy-fartsy is too good for the Ivy League.

SANDY

You'd think he'd want to go to an Ivy League college.

LENNY

He spends the application fees for both and he doesn't want to go. You try earning twenty bucks, mister. It ain't so easy.

CATHY

I know why Stevie wants to go to Dickinson.

JEFF

Why?

CATHY

Two words. Stephe Gold.

JEFF

Ahhh.

LENNY

I knew it had to be something like that.

SANDY

That settles it. You're not going. That woman is a hussy. She broke your heart once with your best friend yet. Why would you want to come 500 miles within that wench.

LENNY

Good point, Sandy.

JEFF

You said you wouldn't tell!!

CATHY

Since when do my promises mean anything?

JEFF

That's nothing to be proud of.

CATHY

Oh shut up. You've never lied?

JEFF

No, I haven't.

CATHY

Who's the one that told mom and dad you never got high at that Grateful Dead concert just before you got sick. Stevie told me everything.

JEFF

Thanks Steve. That's the last I tell you anything.

Sandy gets up and goes to the kitchen.

SANDY

OK. I'm cutting the cake. Come here and help me, Cathy

Cathy goes in to help her mother.

LENNY

C'mon. Let's not spoil Jeff's homecoming. Jeff, Dr. Kaplan tells your mother and me you've been going down to the comedy club.

LISA

Jeff's the funniest. Remember your Elvis impression? I love that.

Jeff begins a fairly decent impression of Elvis doing "Return to Sender"

JEFF

Sent a letter to the postman....

CUT TO:

INT. THE CUTLER HOUSE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Everybody except Sandy and Cathy are singing.

EVERYBODY

Return to Sender! Address unknown!!! No such number. No such phone.

Sandy comes in with the cake.

EVERYBODY

Happy Birthday to Jeff. Happy Birthday to Jeff.

JEFF
But my birthday is not for 3 more months.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - MONDAY

DR. KAPLAN
How was your visit?

JEFF
My family is nuttier than the entire Young Adult Unit combined.

DR. KAPLAN
(laughing)
Many families are. Have you ever heard the expression "dysfunctional family"?

JEFF
Don't believe I have. The word is kinda self explanatory, I guess. What is the clinical meaning of the term?

DR. KAPLAN
Crazy fucking family.

Jeff laughs out loud.

JEFF
That's the Cutlers in a nutshell, so to speak.

Dr. Kaplan chuckles.

DR. KAPLAN
Did you get along with your mom?

JEFF
As good as usual. You know. She showed her love through her cooking.

DR. KAPLAN
Is she a good cook?

JEFF
The best. Her brisket is known throughout the Northeast Corridor and parts west.

DR. KAPLAN
Is that so bad?

JEFF
No, it's not.

DR. KAPLAN
I'm of two minds on this. Although we can certainly attribute your fear of intimacy to your mother, the fact remains that you can't change people. She's always going to be who she is. Nothing you can do can change that.

JEFF
I know, but it drives me crazy.

DR. KAPLAN
Well, don't let it drive you crazy. In some ways you are healthier than her.

JEFF
I get that feeling.

DR. KAPLAN
At least you're getting help for what ails you.

JEFF
Yep. Mom's got many, many briskets to go on the road to recovery.

INT. COMEDY HUTCH - NIGHT

Jeff is onstage.

JEFF
My mom shows her love through her cooking. She's always been unable to show her love the normal way, so instead she uses food. She's like many Jewish women of her generation.

Audiences chuckles.

JEFF
(continued)
Of course her cooking is better.

Audience roars.

JEFF
(continued)
OK. That's my set. If you liked me,
my name is Jeff Cutler. If you
didn't like me my name is John
Smith.

Audience applauds as Jeff puts the mike back on the stand.

INT. COMEDY HUTCH - MINUTES LATER

Shawn sticks his head into the club.

SHAWN
Jeff, can I speak with you for a
second.

Jeff and Shawn go out into the hallway.

SHAWN
Question.

JEFF
Sure, go ahead Shawn.

SHAWN
What are your career goals?

JEFF
What do you mean?

SHAWN
I mean, where do you see yourself 5
years from now in comedy.

JEFF
I've never thought of it Shawn. I
pretty much just like doing this
for fun.

SHAWN
I think that comes across. People
respond to the fact that you're
enjoying yourself.

JEFF
Thanks.

SHAWN

You're welcome. Hey, I brought you out here for a reason. We're having a contest next week. It's invitation only. Interested?

JEFF

Sure.

SHAWN

Good. Don't you wanna know what the prize is?

JEFF

If you want to tell me.

SHAWN

This guy. You're so genuine.

(to himself)

I like this guy.

(to Jeff)

The prize is a shot on Mike Douglas. My girlfriend does his makeup. I'm really doing this for the club. You know, publicity. But if it helps a young comic. So be it.

JEFF

(now visibly excited)

Cool!

SHAWN

It's next week. Can I give you some free advice?

JEFF

Sure.

SHAWN

Be yourself. And bring your best material. This is not open mike. The thing to do is open with your second best material, then close with your killer shit. That's how you win a contest.

JEFF

This is valuable advice. Thank you so much, man.

SHAWN
Knock em dead kid. I expect big
things from you.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - DAY

Morning meeting.

DR. KAZANJIAN
The cleaning lady said she thinks
somebody has been having sex in the
rec room. This is very serious. We
will not tolerate that kind of
behavior. Is that understood?

No response.

DR. KAZANJIAN
I said, is that understood?

EVERYBODY
Understood.

DR. KAZANJIAN
We have a big announcement to make.

TRACY
We're very excited for you.
(to Jeff)

MARY ELLEN
I think they'd like to hear.

JEFF
As everyone knows, I've been going
to the open mike once a week.

MARY ELLEN
C'mon, tell them already. I can't
stand the suspense.

JEFF
OK. They're having a contest at the
club next week. It's by invitation
only and I've been invited, so to
speak.

ANNE
That's great.

KELVIN
Way to go dude

ANNE
Yeh, way to go.

MARY KATHERINE
That's great.

There are three new patients in this scene. SERENA APPLIGATE- a twenty something African American woman with a big fro and a perpetual smile; ROBERT KEEVER, dressed in classic preppie attire(alligator shirt, chinos, docksiders) ; CHARLES BRILL, a punker wearing a Clash t-shirt and sporting a Mohawk.

CHARLES
We'll have to get an excursion to come see ya, man.

ANNE
Yeh. Great idea.

JEFF
Not a great idea.

KELVIN
Why do you say that?

JEFF
(pained expression on face)
Well.....

DR. KAPLAN
I think under the circumstances it's not the best. Jeff needs to concentrate.

SERENA
You didn't tell them, did you?

JEFF
(sheepishly)
No, I didn't.

KELVIN
Motherfucker didn't tell his comedy homies he's in the insane asylum. Is that some fucked up shit or what?

SERENA
Are you ashamed of us?

DR. KAPLAN

Hold the phone people. I need to interject something here. Jeff went entirely on my advice.

TYRONE

Yeh. Listen up. We're all proud of you. Almost everyone here has done a lot of work or will do a lot of hard work getting their shit together. We're not ashamed of anyone of you.

MINDI

Well, maybe one of us.

Group chuckles.

TYRONE

Even you, Mindi. You've come a long way. But let's get real. Society still has a ways to go before it treats people like you as equals. It's not right, but you have to be prepared for it.

Shot of everyone listening.

DR. KAPLAN

Tyrone makes a good point.

TYRONE

(turns to Jeff)

Jeff why don't you tell people what happened with your friend.

JEFF

This friend I made at the club supports himself by driving a cab. He happened to be my driver when I went to my parents' a few weeks ago. Ever since then, he barely talks to me except to say hi.

SERENA

That sucks.

KELVIN

He wasn't your friend, then.

JEFF

You're right. But it still hurts.

TRACY
I feel your pain.

JEFF
(suppresses laughter)
Thanks Tracy. That's mighty white
of you.

TRACY
What did I say?

INT. COMEDY HUTCH - NIGHT

It is the big contest. The room is packed. The lights are dimmed, as the stage is still empty.

SHAWN
(O.S.)
Good evening ladies and gentleman.
Welcome to Comedy Hutch's first
annual Tournament of Champions.

Audience applauds. Serena, Kelvin and Anne are applauding. Dr. Kaplan, Tyrone and Tracy are wildly applauding at another table.

CUT TO:

The stairway, where the other comics are waiting patiently to be called.

CUT TO:

SHAWN
(O.S.)
As you know there are 25 comics here tonight, but there can only be one winner. Everyone will do 3 minutes. This isn't like regular open mike. If you go over, you get one warning. If you ignore said warning I personally will get on stage and mercilessly cut you off. So, without further a due, I'm pleased to bring up our special guest for the evening. Ladies and Gentlemen, let's give warm Comedy Hutch welcome to Mr. Mike Douglas.

MIKE DOUGLAS comes up on stage from way in the back of the room. There is thunderous applause.

MIKE DOUGLAS
How is everybody doing tonight?

The audience cheers.

AUDIENCE
OK.

MIKE DOUGLAS
OK, who?

AUDIENCE
OK, Mike.

MIKE DOUGLAS
Everybody here to have a good time?

AUDIENCE
Yes, Mike.

Some scattered laughter.

MIKE DOUGLAS
I just want to say that there are
no losers tonight. Everyone's a
winner.

Audience applauds.

MIKE DOUGLAS
I'm going to introduce the first
act then Shawn will take it from
there.

Pulls out an index card.

MIKE DOUGLAS
Forgive me. I usually have the
advantage of cue cards where I
work.

Audience chuckles appreciatively.

SERENA
Go Mike.

Audience laughs.

MIKE DOUGLAS
Our first act is a comedy team
that, since open mikes started
here, have been just tearing up the
place.

(MORE)

MIKE DOUGLAS(cont'd)

With their unique brand of off the
wall humor..I give you Earl!

Audience applauds.

CUT TO:

Brian and Steve on stairway ready to go on.

JEFF

Kill, guys.

STEVE

You too, Jeff.

BRIAN

Kill.

JEFF

I will.

CUT TO:

Steve and Brian take the stage. The next two minutes is a montage of shots of both performers and audience to a musical interlude. The laughter, the applause and the performers should be barely be audible but just enough to enhance the experience. At the end of sequence Shawn's voice, now completely audible, and without any music, comes on.

SHAWN

(O.S.)

OK. People, give us a few minutes
to come up with our decision.

SHOT OF SERENA AND ANNE.

SERENA

What do you think?

ANNE

He won. I know it.

Lights go down again. Audience makes that "rhubarb apple" noise that crowds always make in the movies. Mike Douglas ascends the stage. The audience applauds.

MIKE DOUGLAS

Are you ready?

Crowd goes nuts.

CROWD

Yeh!!!

MIKE DOUGLAS

OK. The 2nd runner up will get to host the next open mike. The 1st runner up will get a weekend guest shot here at the club. And the winner gets a shot on my show. The 1st runner up is Frank Williams.

FRANK WILLIAMS is an African/American in his mid 30's. He is exquisitely attired in a perfectly fitting suit. He bounds up on stage.

MIKE DOUGLAS

Such energy.

FRANK

Thanks Mike. Thanks Judges. This is almost as good as...the pussy!!

Audience howls. Frank exits stage.

MIKE DOUGLAS

Let's give a nice hand for Frank again.

Audience applauds.

CUT TO:

Dr. Kaplan and the staff at their table.

DR. KAPLAN

C'mon Jeff.

The others are crossing their fingers and gritting their teeth.

CUT TO:

MIKE DOUGLAS

(looks at piece of paper)

Now for our 1st runner up. Is everyone excited? I know I am. And the 1st runner up is Todd Diamond.

TODD DIAMOND is a handsome, dark haired young man in his 20's. He is casually attired, but hip looking.

TODD
 I'd like to thank the Academy.....
 (waits for the laugh like
 the pro that he is)
 And my mother.

Audience laughs.

MIKE DOUGLAS
 I'd like to thank your mother too.

Audience chuckles.

TODD
 That's where I know you from. Don't
 you usually have a drink in your
 hand?

Audience laughs. Todd steps down all the while waving like
 Queen Elizabeth.

MIKE DOUGLAS
 Is everybody ready?

Serena and Anne are crossing their fingers and closing their
 eyes.

CUT TO:

Jeff is in the stairwell with the rest of the comics. He has
 a resigned but satisfied expression on his face.

MIKE DOUGLAS
 And the winner is...
 (pauses)
 The first champion, or I should say
 champions, of the Tournament of
 Champions....
 (pause again, more
 dramatically)
 Earl!!!

Crowd goes wild. Steve and Brian go up to the stage.

BOB GOES THE WEASEL
 We'd like to thank Todd Diamond for
 thanking the academy for us.

They leave the stage to thunderous applause.

CUT TO:

Shawn laughing uproariously.

CUT TO:

INT. PIZZA PLACE NEARBY - NIGHT

Jeff is in there with Serena, Anne and Kelvin.

KELVIN

Man. You shoulda won. You were way better than Earl. They're just Steve Martin with schizophrenia.

SERENA

Yeh!

ANNE

Brian was kinda cute.

SERENA

Anne!!

ANNE

Well, he was. But he's the enemy.

KELVIN

You should be proud of yourself.

ANNE

Yes.

KELVIN

I say that since we don't have drinks, let's all raise our slices in honor of Jeff.

They raise their slices.

ANNE

Cheers!!

KELVIN

Das Vidanya

SERENA

You go boy.

JEFF

L'Chaim.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. KAPLAN

You were great the other night.
We're all proud of you.

JEFF

Thank you, Dr. Kaplan.

DR. KAPLAN

So, let's talk about getting you
out of here.

JEFF

I'd like that.

DR. KAPLAN

First thing we'd have to do is to
have you look for an apartment.

JEFF

What would I do after that?

DR. KAPLAN

Have you decided what you want to
do? I assume you've given it some
thought.

JEFF

I'd like to do comedy full time.

DR. KAPLAN

You sure that's realistic?

JEFF

I'm good enough.

DR. KAPLAN

We know you're good but are you
sure you're ready for something
that stressful?

JEFF

I'm afraid that if I don't do it
now, I never will.

DR. KAPLAN

You know, bubbe, you were a pretty
sick pup there for a while.

JEFF

I know Doctor. But this is the time to do it. And I'll be happy to be out of here.

DR. KAPLAN

Where would you move to? Where would you live?

JEFF

I'd like to move either to L.A. or New York?

DR. KAPLAN

That makes sense. That's where I would go.

JEFF

What do I have to do get ready doc?

DR. KAPLAN

You already are ready. You're not committed anymore so when you think you're ready that's when you're ready.

JEFF

My father's coming here this weekend. I'll talk to him about it.

DR. KAPLAN

That's a good place to start.

INT. COMEDY HUTCH - NIGHT

Jeff and Frank Williams are having a conversation in the lobby.

JEFF

Frank, let me ask you something.

FRANK

Sure, buddy. Go ahead.

JEFF

Have you ever thought about going to L.A. Or New York?

FRANK

I'd do it in a heartbeat if I could.

JEFF
What's stopping you?

FRANK
Lotta things.

JEFF
Like what?

FRANK
For one thing, my family. My wife
would kill me if I even brought it
up. And I, unlike most of you bums,
have a real job.

JEFF
Let me ask you something.

FRANK
Go.

JEFF
What?

FRANK
Go. If you want to go to New York,
Now's the time.

JEFF
What about the hospital?

FRANK
I'd get out of there first.

JEFF
(laughing)
You know what I mean.

FRANK
Are you asking me if you should
stay in this shit-hole just cause
you went a little crazy a while
back? Is that what you're asking?

JEFF
Yeh.

FRANK
Hell yeah. Listen you ain't crazier
than most folks around here. So you
had a rough spell. Who hasn't. Can
I be honest?

JEFF

Are you ever anything but?

FRANK

You're a funny guy, but there's nothing about your stuff that sets you apart from about 20 other Jewish comics with mother issues. Do you dig what I'm telling you, my Jewish brother?

JEFF

So what are you saying?

FRANK

What I'm saying is if there's 20 of you Jews in Philly how many will there be in Jew York?

JEFF

I'll let that slide cause I know you secretly want to be a Jew.

FRANK

You know it. I could go for some of that Pastrami on that half and half rye bread at the Stage Deli right now.

JEFF

With Russian dressing and a slice of raw onion. Yummy.

FRANK

What I'm trying to get across in the big leagues, it's not enough just to be good. You have to stand out.

JEFF

So what are you suggesting?

FRANK

Do you know what I tell my students?

JEFF

You teach High School English, don't you?

FRANK

That's right. I tell them "Write what you know."

JEFF

So are you saying what I think
you're saying?

FRANK

How many comedians are talking
about what you've gone through?

JEFF

Not a whole heck of a lot.

FRANK

Name one.

JEFF

I like it.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. KAPLAN

I won't allow it.

JEFF

You can't stop me.

DR. KAPLAN

There's where you're wrong. I sure
as hell can stop you. I write the
orders for the excursions. I could
keep you on the floor until your
discharge.

JEFF

You wouldn't.

DR. KAPLAN

No I wouldn't. I'm not evil, just a
shrink who wants the best for my
patient. If you want to open up
your sores for the world to see, be
my guest. But there are a couple of
ground rules I want you to agree
to.

JEFF

I'm listening.

DR. KAPLAN

First of all. No real names are to
be used. There are legal
considerations.

JEFF

OK.

DR. KAPLAN

This means patients and staff both.

JEFF

OK.

DR. KAPLAN

And I want to take a look at everything you write. We'll do it in our sessions.

JEFF

Do I have a choice?

DR. KAPLAN

No.

EXT. SOUTH FIELD - DAY

Jeff is going for a walk on South Field. He walks over to the fence and climbs over.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - DAY

TYRONE

Did anyone see Jeff?

TRACY

He went for a walk. To clear his head, he said.

TYRONE

South Field?

TRACY

That's where he said.

TYRONE

I was just there.

(pauses. It dawns on him)
Damn!! Tracy call the guard and then call his doctor. Motherfucker went AWOL. With just 2 weeks to go. Damn!!

EXT. WEST PHILLY - DAY

Jeff is running down the street. He stops when he realizes that nobody his following him.

CUT TO:

Jeff walking down the street. He walks by a motorcycle gang. The name "Masai Rumlbers" is written on the outside. There is a pretty motley crew; women, men, blacks, whites, Hispanics. They're just hanging out having drinks, smoking weed. Jeff tries to nonchalantly to walk by. Big SPANISH DUDE sees him.

SPANISH DUDE

Where do you think you're going?

A tough looking, slightly pudgy woman approaches Jeff. We'll call her BIKER MOLL.

BIKER MOLL

He's missing something. You know what?

SPANISH DUDE

I know what.

(reaches into cooler
brings out beer)

Here, my friend. We don't want t

Hands beer to Jeff.

JEFF

No thanks.

BIG BLACK DUDE with Bandanna walks up to Jeff.

BIG BLACK DUDE

You think you're better than us?

He holds Jeff as the Spanish Dude and his girlfriend force a beer down Jeff's throat as they emit gleeless laughter. Suddenly, a big blue Oldsmobile pulls up. A man gets out. It's Frank.

FRANK

Where have you been? Mom's been looking all over for you.

JEFF

(trying to play along)

Oh, hi. Yeh, let's go.

SPANISH DUDE

Not until he has his breakfast, my friend.

FRANK

I think you might want to reconsider.

BIG BLACK DUDE

Oh yeh. And what will you do if we don't?

Frank karate chops both guys in vital areas so that they are now kissing dirt. He sweep kicks the lady so that she goes flying into the cooler.

FRANK

We better go before more of them show up.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S CAR - DAY

JEFF

Where'd you learn to fight like that?

FRANK

I was in a gang when I was a kid then I honed my skills with 3 tours of duty in Nam.

JEFF

Saw a lot of action did you?

FRANK

Not something I care to discuss. Saved your sorry ass didn't I?

JEFF

Yes you did.

Jeff looks over to Frank. He has a big grin on his face.

FRANK

I take back what I said about you not being crazy. You must be crazy to walk through this neighborhood without a machine gun. What the hell were you thinking?

JEFF
I have a lot on my mind.

FRANK
You hungry?

JEFF
I can always eat.

FRANK
My momma always said, "If you want someone to spill the beans, feed them first" She was a wise woman.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - DAY

It is Sunday dinner at the Williams House. Frank and Jeff are joined by his wife HASSIE, 35; daughter KEISHA, 7; and son FRANK JR., 12. Hassie enters the room with a huge, juicy roast chicken. She puts it on the table.

HASSIE
Kids, I want you to let our guest choose first.

KEISHA
(to Jeff)
Do you like the dark meat or the white meat?

JEFF
I like the dark meat.

KEISHA
Me too.

JEFF
But you know what I like even more than the dark meat?

KEISHA
What's that?

JEFF
The wings. I love me some wings.

Frank Jr. and Keisha laugh. Hassie smiles.

HASSIE

Frank told me what happened at the contest. That doesn't seem fair.

FRANK

You wuz robbed. Say it. You was robbed. There's no way you shouldn't have won that thing. No way.

HASSIE

Settle down darlin'. He'll get another chance. Frank tells me you're still in the hospital.

KEISHA

Ohhh. The Nut House.

HASSIE

Now Keisha. You know that's not polite. What do you say to Jeff.

KEISHA

I'm sorry.

HASSIE

Jeff you're welcome here anytime. Frank talks about you all time. I'm sure the Good Lord has you there for a reason.

JEFF

Will the food always be this good?

HASSIE

(smiling warmly)

Please, boy. You better get out of here.

(she's smiles a warmly)

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

FRANK

I'm gonna drop you off a couple of blocks away. I don't need any trouble with the authorities.

JEFF

I understand. You have my word.

FRANK
Remember what I was telling you the
other day?

JEFF
About talking about all this stuff?

FRANK
Yes. Exactly.

JEFF
Sure.

FRANK
What happened today is a great
example. It writes itself.

JEFF
I dunno.

FRANK
Just think about it.

Jeff gets out of the car.

JEFF
Thanks for dinner.

FRANK
Anytime, my Hebrew brother.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Doctor Kaplan is looking through a notebook and laughing.

DR. KAPLAN
This is good. This is good.

He laughs again.

DR. KAPLAN
Looks like you had quite an
afternoon.

JEFF
It must have slipped my mind.

DR. KAPLAN
And the Masai Rumlbers no less.

JEFF
No less.

DR. KAPLAN

Well, Jeff, I'm no expert but that's funny stuff. I had my misgivings, but as long as your comfortable I'm comfortable. I'm going to take you off special so you can look for a place in New York. I talked to your Dad. He said it's your life and you're free to do as you wish.

JEFF

Not exactly a glowing endorsement, but I'll take it.

DR. KAPLAN

One small favor.

JEFF

Sure.

DR. KAPLAN

Next time you wanna go AWOL do it somewhere else. Capiche?

JEFF

Capiche.

INT. COMEDY HUTCH - NIGHT

Frank is onstage.

FRANK

This next gentleman is not only one funny guy he is also a close personal friend. Give it up for Jeff Cutler.

Audience applauds. Jeff takes the stage.

JEFF

How is everybody this evening.

EVERYBODY

We're fine. How are you?

JEFF

Just fine. I have a confession to make. I'm a mental patient.

CUT TO:

Shawn talking on phone.

SHAWN

So here's the deal. I'll pick you
up at your sisters....wait a sec...
(to passerby)
Did he just say what I think he
said?

CUT TO:

Jeff back on stage.

JEFF

I've been trying to hide it but who
am I kidding? The waitresses ask me
if I want a beer and I respond with
"Wait let me ask that mouse over
there"

Audience laughs

JEFF

Lotta crazy shit happens up there
at the "toot". That's what they
call it. The toot. Like they need
more nicknames for it.

Audience laughs.

JEFF

We got one guy there who has an
impulse control problem.

CUT TO:

Shawn is totally entranced watching from the sound booth.

SHAWN

I like this new direction.

CUT TO:

Jeff back on stage.

JEFF

The other day they served steak for
dinner, so this guy looks at it and
says", I think this calls for my
special A.1. sauce" and proceeds to
pull down his trousers.

Audience laughs.

JEFF
Needless to say that's one guy who
ate the rest of his steak in
seclusion.

Audience howls.

JEFF
That's my set. I'm Jeff Cutler.

Frank comes up on stage.

FRANK
(aside to Jeff)
Great set man. That's what I'm
talking about. That's it.
(back to audience)
Give it up for Jeff.

INT. COMEDY HUTCH STAIRS - NIGHT

SHAWN
Jeff, my office please.

CUT TO:

INT. SHAWN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

SHAWN
So when were you going to tell me?

JEFF
About the hospital?

SHAWN
No, you playing for the Phillies.

JEFF
I'm sorry, but I was afraid. Not
everybody understands.

SHAWN
You shouldn't be afraid. Most
comedians are nuts anyway. The
truth is funny.

JEFF
Thanks. I need to go.

SHAWN
Gotta be back at the booby hatch?

JEFF

Yeh. Or I turn into a pumpkin.

SHAWN

Promise me you'll use that this weekend.

JEFF

I'm not here this weekend.

SHAWN

You are now. You showed me something different this evening. Now get going. I don't want you to lose your privileges.

INT. DOCTOR KAPLAN'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. KAPLAN

The weekend? Great. I'm happy for you. Any luck finding a place?

JEFF

Not yet. Something will turn up.

DR. KAPLAN

Aren't you kind of waiting till the last minute.

JEFF

Yep.

DR. KAPLAN

Some things never change.

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - DAY

Morning meeting.

TRACY

This is Jeff's last full week here. He's leaving next Friday.

TYRONE

Might as well not fight it Jeff. She's gonna hug you one way or another.

Jeff walks over to Tracy and gives her a huge but gentle bear hug.

TRACY
I think I have something in my eye.

Tracy runs out of the room.

MARY ELLEN
We're gonna miss you Jeff.

TYRONE
What's this I hear about you not
having a place yet. And you're
moving to New York?

JEFF
Something will turn up.

INT. COMEDY HUTCH - NIGHT

Jeff has just finished his set. He walks off. He's approached
by JACKIE ROSE, the headliner.

JACKIE
Hey kid. You got guts and you're
funny. That's a good one-two

JEFF
Thanks, Jackie.

JACKIE
Shawn tells me you're looking for a
place in New York?

JEFF
Yes I am. And I have to move next
week.

JACKIE
So happens my agent got me a small
part on a sitcom. I've been wanting
to make the big move out the West
Coast for a while. Would you like
to sublet my place in New York.
You'd be helping me out big time.

JEFF
Who's the crazy one, You or me? Of
course!!

INT. YOUNG ADULT UNIT - DAY

Morning meeting.

DR. KAPLAN
I guess everyone knows it's Jeff's
last day.

TRACY
(sarcastically)
Really?

MARY ELLEN
Maybe everyone would like to go
around the room?

KELVIN
Well sucker. You beat me to it.

JEFF
It's not a contest Kelvin.

KELVIN
I know brother but I'd like to get
out. I'm jealous.

JEFF
Work hard and you'll make it
happen.

MINDI
I'll miss you Jeff.

JEFF
I'll miss you too.

They hug.

EXT. PENNYPACKER INSTITUTE -DAY

Lenny is there with his car.

LENNY
Is that all?

JEFF
Yeh.

LENNY
So you come home this weekend, your
mom helps you get stuff for the
apartment and we go up on Monday.
Good?

JEFF
Good.

INT. JACKIE'S APARTMENT IN NEW YORK - DAY

Jackie and Jeff are standing in the living room with boxes all around.

JACKIE

Trash day is Tuesday. This is a pretty nice building. Don't let Mrs. Nunez in 4B **set you up with her niece. She's a dog.** Here's the landlords number.

(hands Jeff a piece of paper)

Any questions?

JEFF

I'm set.

INT. IMPROV - NIGHT

Jeff is waiting around. Other comics are there. One is a female, CINDY STERNLIEB.

CINDY

You're new here.

JEFF

(extends his hand)

Jeff Cutler

CINDY

Aren't you the one subletting Jackie's place?

JEFF

That's me. How'd you know that?

CINDY

You know how it is. Comedy's a small world.

JEFF

So I've heard.

EXT. NEW YORK - NIGHT

Jeff is walking home. A strange MAN walks up to him.

MAN

Got a light, buddy?

JEFF
Sorry, I don't smoke.

MAN
Alright asshole this is a robbery.

JEFF
Please don't kill me.

MAN
What do you got?

JEFF
Please it's my rent money.

MAN
Hand it over or die.

INT. CUTLER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

It's 4 in the morning. The phone wakes up Lenny and sandy.

LENNY
(groggy)
Hello.

JEFF
Dad.

LENNY
Jeff? It's four in the morning.
Everything OK?

JEFF
Other than the fact I was just
mugged, I'm fine.

LENNY
Oh my god! Sandy, get up. Jeff's
been mugged.

Sandy sits up, groggy.

SANDY
I told you he shouldn't go to New
York. That was such a crazy idea.

LENNY
Let's not get into this at 4 in the
morning.

Sandy grabs the phone.

SANDY
Jeff, honey. Are you OK?

JEFF
I was mugged, Mom.

SANDY
Where are you now?

JEFF
I'm at the pay phone. They don't
install my phone till Monday.

SANDY
Go back to your apartment! Do you
want to get mugged again?

JEFF
Can I talk to Dad?

SANDY
Sure. He wants to talk to you.

She hands the phone back to Lenny.

LENNY
Jeff?

JEFF
I paid rent, thank God. But the
mugger got the rest of my money.

LENNY
I'll get out to him first thing in
the morning. Now get home before
you get mugged again.

INT. IMPROV - NIGHT

The emcee is on stage.

EMCEE
Here's what happens. It's 3
o'clock. I'm going to pass around a
notebook. You sign your name. The
show starts at 10 o'clock. See you
all then.

Jeff starts to leave. Cindy follows him.

CINDY
Wait a sec, Jeff.

JEFF
Oh. Hi Cindy.

CINDY
I heard what happened from Jackie.
You OK?

JEFF
Yeh, I'm OK.

CINDY
He told me you had to borrow money
from your Dad. That's a bummer.

JEFF
Well you do what you gotta do.

CINDY
That's cool. Hey I was wondering.
You wanna hang out until the show?

JEFF
Sure. I'd love to.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY STATION - DAY

Jeff and Cindy are walking down the stairs to the subway.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Shot looking in of Jeff and Cindy on subway talking. They seem to be getting along.

EXT. WILLIAMSBURG, BROOKLYN - AFTERNOON

Jeff and Cindy are walking in Williamsburg, a section in Brooklyn with Hasidic Jews.

JEFF
Where are we going again?

CINDY
This place has the best Hungarian
Goulash. Better than my mom's

JEFF
Your mom is Hungarian too? So's mine.

CINDY
No way.

JEFF
Yes.

They go into the restaurant. There are many Chasidic Jews seated at the tables. A black man and a black woman in their 40's are sittng two tables from Cindy and Jeff.

JEFF
Wow. That's unusual.

CINDY
Not as much as you might think. My guess is they're Muslim.

JEFF
(imitating Johnny Carson)
I...did not know that. Wild, wacky shtuff.

CINDY
And Muslims have similar dietary restrictions to Jews.

JEFF
You learn something new every day.

CUT TO:

INT. KOSHER RESTAURANT - DAY

JEFF
Wow, this is better than my mom's. What do they put in there?

CINDY
Their goulash is known city wide.

JEFF
So what do want to do next. We still have like 4 hours left.

CINDY
How bout the Staten Island Ferry.

EXT. STATEN ISLAND FERRY - EARLY EVENING

Cindy and Jeff are leaning over the edge of the ferry. The sky over New York is just getting dark. It's gorgeous.

CUT TO:

EXT. GREENWICH VILLAGE - NIGHT

An off the wall coffee shop.

JEFF

So what did you do before you came here?

CINDY

I don't want to talk about it.

JEFF

You can trust me.

CINDY

I said I don't want to talk about it.

JEFF

OK.

CINDY

I had a nervous breakdown and I spent 3 months in the mental hospital. My parents thought it would be good to get away.

JEFF

I thought you didn't want to talk about it.

CINDY

I didn't, but for some reason I feel comfortable around you.

JEFF

Shouldn't we be getting back?

CINDY

What about you? Where are you from. What did you do before you came here.

JEFF
I'll tell you later. Let's get out
of here.

CINDY
(looks at watch)
Good idea.

CUT TO:

EXT. IMPROV - NIGHT

Cindy and Jeff get out of a cab. They go into The improv.

COMIC NO#1
You guys made it just in time. The
list came out.

Jeff looks at list.

JEFF
Wow. He's right. I'm on in two
people.

Cindy looks at list.

CINDY
I have about 5. You still haven't
told me what you did.

JEFF
I have to get ready for my set.

CINDY
Sure. The unwritten law.

On stage is ROBERT BLITZER, an emaciated, but charming comic
in his late 30's with black, oily hair and wire-rimmed
glasses.

BLITZER
OK. You ready for the next comic,
people?

The audience is mostly made up of comics and two couples from
Queens.

BLITZER
Let's give it up for Jeff Cutler.

Cindy cheer wildly.

CINDY
 WhooHooo!!!! Yehhhhh!!!!

Jeff comes to the stage.

JEFF
 Good evening ladies and Gentleman
 my name is Jeff Cutler I am fucking
 nuts.

Audiences laughs a perfunctory laugh

JEFF
 No I don't think you understand, I
 just got out of the mental
 hospital. The Looney Bin? The nut
 house?

(One of the guys in the
 Queens group fidgets
 clears his throat)

QUEENS GUY #1
 Tell a dick joke!!!

JEFF
 OK. You're a dick.

QUEENS GUY #1
 Hey. Is that necessary?

JEFF
 I'm sorry. Here's the deal. I was
 in the hospital for two years. I
 had a nervous breakdown but I was
 diagnosed as an acute schizophrenic
 But seriously the looney bin was a
 lot of fun.

Audience starting to warm up

JEFF
 We actually had fun. WE used to go
 on a lot of excursions. On one
 excursion I got everybody in a heap
 of trouble. These black guys
 started to fuck with us. They said
 to me "What's up fellas" and I made
 the mistake of saying back to them,
 "The Sky" They threw rocks at us.

Shot of Cindy laughing. She digs this.

JEFF

There was this other guy. Jim Smith. He was as nuts as they came. He used to lose control all the time. It got to the point that the staff was disappointed if he didn't act out. One day we were having steak and Jim said, "This Calls for My Special Sauce" and he whipped it out right then and there. Funny stuff.

Audience laughs.

INT. OFFICE OF STANLEY MAPLES - DAY

STANLEY MAPLES is a balding man in his late 30's with a goatee.

DR. MAPLES

How do you like our fair city, so far.

JEFF

It has its moment.

DR. MAPLES

I went to medical school with your old shrink. He thought it would be a good idea if I saw you until you get settled.

JEFF

He had good things to say about you too.

DR. MAPLES

I don't have a good thing to say about him. Not a one.

Jeff is taken aback.

JEFF

Um....

DR. MAPLES

I'm joking. I thought you had a sense of humor. Irv said you're a comedian.

JEFF

That's Dr. Kaplan?

DR. MAPLES
Oh I forgot. He doesn't like
patients to call him by his first
name. He's a little uptight.

JEFF
He's OK.

DR. MAPLES
You can call me Stanle.

JEFF
OK, Stan it is.

DR. MAPLES
I can tell a joke or two.

JEFF
OK. Let me have it.

DR. MAPLES
How many Psychiatrists does it take
to change a light bulb?

JEFF
I'll bite.

DR. MAPLES
Only one. But it has to really want
to change.

Jeff laughs.

JEFF
That's not bad at all.

INT. CATCH A RISING STAR - NIGHT

Jeff walks in. Cindy is at the bar with KEITH CHAVIS, a young
black comic from Baltimore, and BARRY BLITZTEIN from Boston.

CINDY
Hey, There he is. Gimme a hug.

JEFF
Hey Cindy.

KEITH
Man I saw your set last night at
The improv. Raw shit. I liked it.
I'm Keith.

JEFF
Pleased to meet you, Keith.

They shake hands.

KEITH
I was just updating Cindy on all
the comedy action in town.

JEFF
OK

Takes his notebook out.

INT. JEFF'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jeff gets up.

CUT TO:

Kitchen. Jeff makes himself bacon and eggs. Walks over to the door gets paper. Walks back to the breakfast table.

CUT TO:

Shower. Jeff is taking shower. He sings a Billy Joel song.

CUT TO:

Jeff is riding subway.

CUT TO:

Jeff enters Washington Square. It is a beautiful day. Jeff is reading a book. This goes on for about 10 seconds.

CUT TO:

Jeff walks up his apartment stairs. It is around noon by shot of his watch. He opens his door. He has mail in his hands.

CUT TO:

Jeff sits down on his couch. He opens one of the pieces of mail. It is a birthday card. It is his 21st birthday. He made it.

CUT TO:

Jeff opens a package of Tastycakes. Sticks a candle in it. Phone rings.

JEFF

Hello. Oh Hi mom. Yes I got your
card. Thank.

(opens card gets check
out)

Nice. Thanks. That's a lot of
money. You shouldn't have.

FADE OUT.